Visions and Service

by

William Lawrence

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VISIONS AND SERVICE

FOURTEEN DISCOURSES DELIVERED
IN COLLEGE CHAPELS

BY

WILLIAM LAWRENCE
BISHOP OF MASSACHUSETTS

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TO

MY WIFE

I INSCRIBE THIS VOLUME

NOTE

A RESIDENCE *of ten years in Cambridge under the shadow of its great University binds one to the students with strong ties of affection. A man cannot come into contact with them daily without gaining confidence in their high purpose, respect for their character, sympathy in their doubts and temptations, and a reverence for their love of truth, their chivalry and their simple faith. Many of the intellectual and religious problems which they encounter can be fought out only by hard thinking and deep discussion. But when they come to Church I believe they want to hear from one who, sympathizing with their difficulties, speaks the most simple, sincere, and strong words of the Christian faith.*

In the earnest hope of helping to a firmer faith and a higher life some young men in Cambridge, as well as other members of a beloved congregation, the words in this volume were spoken. Perhaps they may help a few at a distance.

NOTE

These sermons were preached by me while Dean of the Episcopal Theological School and also Preacher to Harvard University, in St. John's Memorial Chapel, in the Chapel of the University, and in other Collegiate Chapels.

WILLIAM LAWRENCE.

BOSTON, *January 1, 1896.*

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VISIONS AND SERVICE

I

THE YOUNG MAN'S VISION[1]

THERE was war between Syria and Israel. The king of Syria had attempted to surprise the camp of the Israelites several times, but on each occasion the army of Israel had been forewarned and had escaped.

The Syrian king suspected those in his own camp of treachery. Upon calling his men about him, however, and asking for the traitor, he was told that the spy was not among his followers. "But," said they, "Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber."

Such a magician must be seized.

"Go and spy where he is," was the

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, September 29, 1889.

command of the Syrian king. Elisha was at Dothan, with a young man, his servant. The expedition for the capture sets out in the night — "horses and chariots and a great host" — and surrounds Dothan. In the early morning the servant of Elisha, as he is going out of the house, catches sight of the army about the city, and hurries back with the cry, "Alas, my master, how shall we do?" But the prophet, though unarmed and with only one panic-stricken servant to protect him, is not moved by the host of the enemy. "Fear not," he says, "for they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

The young man cannot catch his meaning; he sees no friendly army, no horses or chariots marching to their relief, nothing but the hostile forces. And yet the prophet seems to have some power somewhere to support him. "And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw; and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."[1]

[1] 2 Kings vi. 17.

There was a power there. To the eye of faith the heavenly host was visible, standing behind and around, and giving its support.

I have chosen this incident for our study, this morning, because it seems to suggest some thoughts in connection with this our first Sunday of the opening term of school and college ; a Sunday which has a significance to all of us, for it strikes the note of another year of routine and duty in home, business, and society.

And by coincidence there is a special meaning in this incident to-day, for this Sunday happens to fall upon the Feast of St. Michael and all Angels ; a day when the church lifts up her eyes to the realization of the heavenly host, their number, their power, their order, and their glory. Michaelmas is the title that appropriately marks the opening term of the universities of England.

Here, in the scene, we have a young man panic-stricken at the power of the enemy, led by the prayer of the older man to an upward look, and to open his eyes to the heavenly forces that were standing ready to protect and fight for

the servant of God. In this, we catch the first thought, that the forces, limitless in number and power, were there, waiting only for one of spiritual vision to reveal them. Perhaps at first sight this seems unreal, mystical, and unpractical. And yet is it not similar to many phases of life?

It is a commonplace, for instance, that the enormous increase in men's use of the forces in nature is not due to man's creation, but to his discovery of what was already in nature. The electric forces which are now at work in our streets and homes, and which are causing such readjustment of our habits of life, are not new creations. The latent powers were there, waiting only for the patient labor, the skill and the scientific spirit of man to reveal them and harness them into man's service. Or, again, as the flood of young and eager life poured into this city last week, they knew that in the library and lectures and historic heritages here are storehouses of knowledge and wisdom. It is for this they have come. But if they thought at all, they must have realized that these riches revealed themselves only to those

who were ready to open their eyes to them, and by patient study bring them into their lives.

Now the question arises whether there is not something analogous to this in the realm of character and of spiritual things. Are we to agree that there are limitless resources in nature and in knowledge, and deny that character and spiritual manhood have any such storehouse? Or, are we to accept the fact that the heavenly powers are, and that they stand ready to serve any man who will discover them and call them to his aid?

Here, it seems to me, is to be found the dividing line between those who are going to use and those who are going to misuse the coming year, — whether in college, business, or the home, — in the question whether they are going to trust only to what they have, their present strength, character, social position, and money, or whether they are going to live with the realization that there are infinite powers of character and spirit behind and above them; whether they are going to look only at the enemy, the temptations and trials of life, or whether, with the power of those realized, they

are going to seek heavenly strength to defeat them.

It is here, I think, that the talk of college temptations, of which we hear and read so much, reveals a weak spot in the Christian armor of to-day. There is in it something of the panic-stricken servant, "Alas, my master, how shall we do?" There are college temptations, we know too well. There may be a very few dastardly spirits who delight in leading others into temptation. There are weak youths; and — must we say it? — there are weak parents. There are dangers enough in all phases of life. But what the Christian thought needs to-day is, with the realization of the force of the enemy, a far stronger faith in the force of character; the upward look, the conviction that if a man will only set himself to see into and call down those heavenly powers to his aid, he has a reinforcement which is able to overcome any temptation.

What are these forces? Let me name a few: they are familiar to our ears, but not familiar enough in our personal experience. There is, as the fundamental

power, the truth that God is; that the Almighty, the Jehovah, the Heavenly Father, now lives and works and loves. Perhaps we do not think of it often in this way. Yet, after all, it is the assurance of God's existence that is our deepest and final support. Cut it out from your life, and what have you but chaos? Bring it into your life, not as a commonplace, but as a vital truth, and you have this, that as God is Truth, and Love, and Wisdom, you have, if you abide in God's presence, the whole power of Truth, Love, and Wisdom to back you. You have an infinite storehouse from which to draw. From Him cometh, and may come, in these months, if we seek them, every good and perfect gift.

Again, there is the fact that the Son of God once walked this earth, and that He lived a spotless life; and, having tasted for man the sufferings and ills common to men, and having conquered sin and death, now lives, and sitting on the right hand of the Father, is forever the type of the perfect humanity, and the inspiration to all men to live as in His presence. Imagine for a moment, if you can, the facts and the power of the

life of Jesus cut out, eliminated from history and modern civilization, and from the lives of men, and what have you of character and moral fibre and all that goes to make up the best of humanity? The fact of the Incarnation of the Son of God is, however, a truth from which the world has only begun to draw. There are infinite possibilities still unfathomed.

The truth of the brooding of the Holy Spirit over the lives of men, and of His waiting to touch them with the fire of divine love, has hardly yet been explored.

Again, there is that great army of apostles, saints, and martyrs, who by noble lives and perhaps nobler deaths have given their testimony to the truth of Jesus. The Christian who meets with any enemy knows that he has behind him their sympathy and example. There are, too, those mysterious beings and powers of which this day speaks, ten thousand times ten thousand, angels and archangels, all ministering spirits. Whatever your theory may be about them, they stand for heavenly, spiritual forces waiting to come to the aid of men.

It is of them that we read in great spiritual crises. They break the silence of the first Christmas night, and are the first to speak from the empty tomb on Easter morning. They minister to the Saviour after His victories over the tempter in the wilderness and in Gethsemane. And in the midst of His betrayal there stand twelve legions of angels ready to come at His bidding.

These are only hints and suggestions. No word of man can describe the wealth of spiritual resource that is at the bidding of any Christian. My point is only to emphasize the truth that it is a dull and spiritless life that looks forward to a year of simply holding one's own against the temptations of life. We are altogether too ready to regret that virtue and religion must have a struggle in these days to survive at all. We then settle down to the average tone, feeling that if we are not wholly overcome by the enemy, we are doing well enough. Whereas, with such spiritual resources to draw from, with powers about us waiting for us to seize them and bring them into service, we could gather to ourselves such a force of character, of moral

strength and spiritual purpose, as would confound the enemies that now look so powerful.

It is strange how the best powers are unrecognized because they are unheralded. To estimate the character of many young men as they appear on the surface, some might say that they were wholly thoughtless ; some might say that they were cynical and bad. Some do say all these. I believe it to be true, however, that there are very few who do not have beneath that superficial manner, certainly in their more serious moments, when they are most themselves, a real desire to do better and to be stronger and purer and more useful than they are. They would like to draw some of the heavenly forces to their aid ; they do not realize that their classmates and friends are desiring the same ; so they drop down to the average. But if the hearts of all those who want more of the heavenly vision and power should be revealed, we should stand amazed at their number.

Thus far I have been trying to emphasize the fact of the heavenly powers, and of a desire in many for them. The

question now comes before us, How is the vision to be gained, and how are the powers to be brought into service?

The answer is in the text: "And Elisha prayed and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes."

Prayer; and yet I do not understand by this, merely formal verbal prayer. In it is first the upward look, the heavenly determination in life and hope. The resources of nature reveal themselves only to him who has an eye for them and a patient determination to seek them. The secrets of knowledge are an open vision only to the student. The powers of heaven wait for the bidding of him who has the look and the aim toward heavenly things. Let a man realize ever so vividly the danger of the temptations about him, and if he have no desire for strength of character, he is helpless. Let a man long for purity and the attainment of high ideals, and if his life and talk are of the earth, earthy, the ideals are impossible. Let a man envy the faith of others, their usefulness and their highmindedness, and if he do not look upward to Him from whom come all these gifts, he will die envying another

for graces which he has made no effort to gain.

Here is the crucial point. We want the heavenly forces to back us. Have we the determination to drag them down to our aid? Have we the patience to so frame our thoughts and lives that we can call them? In other words, if you want to grow in character this year, if you want to keep pure and true, if you want to have the strength to meet temptation, you must do as in everything else, keep on the alert for it; form habits which will help you towards it.

Young men, and older men too, drop prayer and worship and all regular religious habits for years, and are then surprised some day to wake up to the fact that they have lost their faith. Then they lay the blame on the Church, on an uninteresting preacher, or on their circumstances, on anything but themselves. Of course they have lost their faith; faith would not be worth the having if it could be kept with such neglect. No! as you value your faith, your God and your Saviour, as you look for a nobler and better character, keep the spiritual eye upward. Pray when and where you will,

but pray as a habit. The heavenly eye must be kept trained and adjusted to heavenly visions if it would gain anything from them. Habit, patient determined habit, is the basis of the best characters and of the largest revelations; habit that is never allowed to master the spirit, but that serves the spirit in leading up to higher and higher standpoints. Hold on to your habit of worship. Sunday after Sunday, join with others in prayer and praise; and so stimulate the spiritual vigor which may have abated in the week.

Thus far I have been speaking of ourselves and of our own spiritual enforcement. But the question arises as to what place this truth has in our relation to other people; in trying, for instance, to do our duty by our friends or our children.

When you see your old schoolmate, or your present classmate or fellow clerk or companion, gradually drifting away from religious habits, and then from religious life; when you watch him weakening in his convictions of right and wrong, of purity and honor; and you

know that the powers of the world, the love of popularity, of a good time, or of money are looming up in front of him; when you long to stand behind him and warn him and brace him up and bring him back to faith and purity, how are you going to do it? Will you simply tell him that he ought to turn over a new leaf and do better? Will you urge him to go to church with you? Will you ask him to give his soul to Jesus?

You may do one or all of these. But I tell you that before these touch or help him he is going to look you in the eye. He is going to look you through and through, and if he discovers any faltering of faith on your part, if he learns that some of the same weaknesses attach to you that you have found in him; if he sees not in your life the strength of character, the simplicity, the calm assurance which comes from real experience, your words are worse than useless. But if your life and character tell of heavenly powers gained, of truth and honor behind and around you, of sincerity and humility, then who knows what heavenly visions he may have, what

warnings of conscience, what shame, what repentance, what hope?

Or again, when the young man of earnest thought and love of truth comes to you panic-stricken at the waning or loss of his old child-faith, when some reading or study has startled him for the first time to really doubt and deny his old creed, even all Christian truth, as he turns to you with the feeling that as you are a Christian in profession he may claim you as his guide, with the cry, "Alas, my master, how shall we do?" what have you for an answer? Merely the cold statement that these are days when faiths are easily lost; that you have not much yourself; that he will have to get along without it? Will you tell him that skepticism is in the air, is infectious; that he will get over it after a while? Or have prayer and heavenly aspirations so enriched your life that the young man catches in your character glimpses of the heavenly powers, and sees the possibilities of his own life; forgets his loss of faith through despair, and calls to his service those forces which only Heaven can send him?

I have been speaking mostly to the younger people, but I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that there are others than young people in this congregation.

I turn to you parents, who are or who ought to be the interpreters of the heavenly life to your children. When your boy comes to you with his first direct question, when he searches your faith to its foundation with that honest inquiry as to the meaning of your prayers, your creed, and your worship, are you going to throw him off by telling him to ask his Sunday-school teacher or his minister, or not to bother about such things? He will bother about them. He will ask. And those questions must be answered by men and books of unbelief if he gets no response from a man of belief. Then is your opportunity; are you able to seize it? Is your faith in the heavenly life real and strong and deep enough to lift him out of his questions into assurance? Is the response of your life consistent with the answer of your lips? While you talk of heavenly things, do you live the heavenly life? While you urge him to the upward look, to the realization of the powers of right-

eousness and truth, are your eyes too uplifted? And are these same powers backing your life in business, society, and politics? I tell you that the boy's question strikes deep, and only a life can reveal the answer. So, my friends, we are all interpreters, revealers of the heavenly powers to men; all Elishas unfolding visions of spiritual ambitions and armies of spiritual powers. This is the glory of the ministry, that its whole work is the revealing to men by word and life the truths and the forces of the heavenly life. It is the prophet's or the preacher's mission. Aye, it is the mission of every man, minister, teacher, parent; the pointing upward, the revealing of the limitless resources of the spiritual world, the bringing of those forces to the development of character, and the increase of strength to overcome the enemy.

As our closing thought let us follow to its end the story. "And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. And when they came down to him," "the Lord smote the Syrians with blindness," and Elisha led them captive to Samaria and delivered them to the king of Israel.

Given a man of faith and the heavenly powers behind him, and you have untold possibilities. History is full of such instances; men and women, single-handed, but with the heavenly vision, effecting what armies could hardly accomplish. Trusting in the heavenly powers, Luther roused the heart of Europe against the tyranny of the Pope. By faith Latimer, when led to the stake, cheered his companions with the assurance that they should light such a candle in England as would never be put out. In obedience to his heavenly insight, Livingstone entered the heart of Africa and led the Christian world to realize the degradation and slavery of the dark continent. By the open vision of the young man, Gordon led the hosts in China and became a martyr in Soudan. By faith Patteson and Hannington and Father Damien have given to this century the types of Christian heroism.

Keep, therefore, your eye upon the heavenly powers; call them to your service, and with them around you take up the routine and the duties of life.

II

THE CHALLENGE OF JESUS[1]

JOHN THE BAPTIST'S work was done. The popular enthusiasm for him had passed; forsaken by the crowd, almost friendless, imprisoned, nothing remained for him in this life but the death sentence of Herod and the axe of the executioner. The last message had just passed from the Baptist to Jesus, and His answer was on its way to the dungeon. As the people followed with their eye the retiring figures of the messengers of the imprisoned John, the memory of the scene of his preaching and popularity must have swept over them; and the contrast of his position then and now must have moved them, some to pity, but the most of them to a disdain of a man who had mounted, and for the moment had rested on the crest of a wave of popular enthusiasm, but who

[1] Appleton Chapel, Harvard University, February 2, 1890.

had sunk, and was now imprisoned and degraded.

Anticipating these thoughts, the Saviour hastened to convince the people that the failure was with them, and not with the Baptist; that in their mistaken view of his mission they had failed to grasp the greatness of his character; that in going out to see a man who was the object of popular applause, they had neglected to see in him the elements which, when the crisis came, threw popular applause to the winds.

"And when the messengers of John were departed, He began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled and live delicately, are in kings' courts. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet." [1]

Three types of character, — all of them existing in the Baptist's day, all of them existing in our day, — three

[1] Luke vii. 24–26.

types, each of which appeals to every one of us, and claims our interest, and may claim our lives.

"A reed shaken with the wind." With those words, our memories, like the memories of those who had stood on Jordan's banks, run back to a summer's day, when, as we have walked through some meadow, or floated down some placid stream, we have watched the stately sedges and reeds sway and bend beneath the moving air; they seem to anticipate the coming breeze before we feel it, and prepare to bend their heads to avoid the sharp or sudden blast; graceful, yielding, they right themselves, and swing again to the changing air.

The perfect type of the pliable character. We have not time to describe it as it was in the Baptist's day. There are so many phases that interest us now all about us. It is one of the admirable features of culture that it adds to the grace of living. The highly cultivated man may have the same strong convictions as the ignorant man, but he expresses them in a gentler and more sympathetic way, and so avoids the friction of hard and angular characters.

In these days, when popular opinion gathers force so quickly, and moves in such varied currents, and when the convictions and sentiments are so intricate and so differently expressed, it is well, it is necessary, that tact and grace and a wide sympathy with other views should come to the aid of strong opinion and help it yield and bend in certain ways, though standing firm by its deeper convictions. But — and here is the point of the Saviour's word — the danger comes when yielding and pliability become the characteristic of the man, and strength of character is sapped in the effort to meet every wave of popular opinion, and to let it pass over without resistance.

One might almost say that this is the danger of the nineteenth century, and the temptation which above all besets every boy and young man who has an ambition in life. The rise of democracy has put the power into the hands of the people and of public opinion. He who would succeed must be in touch with the people, and sensitive to every movement of public opinion. We know that the manufacturer who expects to sell his goods next year must already know,

or learn, or rather feel, what the people are going to want next year; and the politician who is going to get office must have already anticipated the popular opinion on certain questions; and so with the smallest spheres of life. The result is that, like some animals that can feel the coming storm before they see it, we are developing an extreme sensitiveness to popular movements and popular opinion which may work to our safety, and which often works to our destruction. This temptation to yield quietly and gracefully to the breezes of popular opinion — there is not one of us that does not feel it.

We have seen a young man enter politics, and in the first years of his political life stand as stiff and true under the varying movements as the little reed that is just springing from the meadow. But as he rises into popular view and feels more directly the waves of the different parties and opinions, how he droops and sways! And who can tell which way he will next swing? In his political rise he has reached a position where the waves of party affiliation and policy have a much heavier weight than

any of us realize. His opinions are no weaker, but the pressure is so much heavier that his convictions have to yield.

We have seen girls enter society, and young men enter college life, and pass through the same experience. At first the ideas of the true life, though small and narrow in some features, are clear and strong. Home and school life and parents' words have set the lines of right and wrong. With the larger life of society and college, however, principles carried into action become more intricate and definite, convictions more difficult. Those whom we admire do what we consider questionable, and those whom others admire do what we believe is low and degrading or wrong. Then comes the shrinking from being considered peculiar, from setting ourselves up as stronger or better than the rest. What right has one ugly reed to stand stiff and upright, when all the others bend gracefully to the breeze? And so we bend; we will not break, we say. Thus we do the "correct thing;" we create no ill-feeling, we appear modest and never self-assertive; we move in sym-

pathy with our comrades ; we strengthen no one, and help no one to keep his convictions, and gradually our principles weaken. Unless, my friends, we guard ourselves and keep true to our better selves, and sometimes dare to stand strong, we become the world's puppet ; admired, and at the same time despised ; to the popular view, respectable ; to the view of all true men, and of your inner self, simply despicable.

You know, and I know, men and women to-day, whom we meet in society and see in the clubs and on the streets, who are not bad or grossly immoral ; they are no worse than the public opinion about them makes them, and no better. They simply exist, and gracefully bend as they are moved.

Is it of one of us that Jesus speaks ? A reed shaken with the wind ?

" But what went ye out for to see ? A man clothed in soft raiment ? "

It cannot be that this type exists in modern life, we say. In those ancient days when monarchs lived in royal state and the people were ignorant, character and position might have been measured

by the wealth of garments and houses and the size of retinues. And in Europe, we may still find the same. A social caste, an aristocracy, create social ambitions and all the sycophant's spirit which goes with them. But in the democracy, each man is measured by his worth, not in houses and carriages and clothes, but as a man of character. The people in St. Petersburg, Berlin, and even in London, may crowd out to see those who are sumptuously apparelled and live in kings' houses; but we — we Americans — flock and crowd about the man; we select the noblest character in the community for our applause; our newspapers are full of the wise sayings and ennobling words of the purest and most intelligent and truest men in the land; we hear not of the people whose only title to popular esteem is their income and their houses and their dances.

Is it in sober truth, or in sarcasm, that this is spoken? Let each man answer for himself.

If one can figure popular interest by the circulation of these newspapers which treat of men and women clothed in soft raiment, of those which are filled with

petty personalities and society gossip, and talk about the silliest and weakest and most despicable creatures in society, I am afraid that our assertions of popular interest in the noble character must be taken as sarcasm. The gossip of kings' courts had some touch of character, for it dealt with historic interests and real powers, though it dealt with them in a mean way. And the thought of an aristocracy has in it associations with a noble past at least, though the present be ignoble: but the reading by the half hour and hour together of the petty personalities of those whose only distinction is that they have suddenly become rich, the devouring of books that treat of the silliest and not the strongest and noblest characters in society makes us ashamed of ourselves.

Oh! ye upholders of democracy, where man is man, and manhood is respected for its own sake, what go ye out for to see? Do our newspapers, our small talk, and much of our popular literature belie us? Have we no nobler object of interest than richly clothed men and women, and no nobler ideal than to become as one of them? In our weaker moments some

of us envy them, but at heart we despise them, and despise ourselves for regarding them.

But what went ye out for to see? A prophet?

A prophet. We have a crude notion of what that is — a man of severe mien, strong but hard, denunciatory, unsympathetic; or one who, magician-like, foretells events in the far future.

But surely there is something greater and more vital in the true prophet than foretelling events and denouncing sins. The prophet is the speaker for God; he interprets to men the heart and thought of God. Two features, therefore, belong to him, which are not confined to the days of Elijah or of John the Baptist, or to the pulpit and the ordained preachers of these days, but features which may be in the possession of any one, thus making him, up to the limit of his powers, a Prophet; and these are the knowledge of God and the knowledge of men.

A young man breaks from a maze of doubts about God and religion into the conviction that whatever else may be

true, righteousness is eternally right; and he lives by that. Soon he finds that living by that law he is led into the realm of truth, of purity, of love, of sacrifice, and of grateful service. Behind all these he craves the fact of a personality. And then by that same path, over which millions have trod, he is led to the faith in the personal God, the Heavenly Father. From lame and halting aspirations he is drawn to more direct and distinct prayer. Then, in that communion which is more than prayer, he receives from God his noblest hopes, his highest ambitions, and his deepest truths. As God whom he adores and with whom he communes is perfectly pure, true, and just, the man becomes sensitive to impurity, untruth, and injustice. As he speaks or acts, so far as he is in communion with God, he speaks or acts for God. The man who thus knows God does not necessarily ascend the pulpit steps, nor stand like Elijah, or the Baptist, before kings, but in the smaller circle of his friends he speaks, and in the wider circles of his acquaintances he acts. His voice may find an echo in hearts at a distance. In book and song and story

he may speak. But in all these, when his voice sounds for the right and true, he speaks for God; he is God's prophet. Coleridge, Maurice, Keble, and Kingsley were prophets by their firesides as well as through their books. Carlyle also in his early days, Ruskin and Bright; aye, and many men whose voices have never reached beyond their fireside or the limits of their humble village, men of God, peasants and miners and factory hands, were prophets. For, by a close and intimate communion, tested by years of spiritual experience, they have known God; and when they have his word to speak, they have uttered it with no uncertain sound.

The prophet must have a knowledge of men. For how can he speak to their sins, their wants, or their ambitions, unless he know well what they are? He cannot stand apart; but living, working, enjoying, suffering with men, he will probe to their innermost thoughts, and with that instinct which comes with intimate knowledge, he will leap at their most secret ambitions. As sensitive as the tenderest reed to the coming breeze, he will feel the coming social and reli-

gious movements and will utter his sharp note of warning or of hope. Study the lives of those whom I have mentioned, and you will see how we are living in the sins and the blessings which those men anticipated a generation ago.

I say that they are as sensitive as the reed; but — mark the difference — unlike the reed, when it is a question of right or wrong, they refuse to bend to the popular breeze, but assert the right of the man to stand. Aye! so convinced are they of God's truth that it is hardly an effort to stand: for the principles of God are so inwrought into their characters that they can do nothing but stand. Their knowledge of men gives them the tact, the insight, and the readiness to bend when yielding is right; their knowledge of God keeps them true and strong when yielding is weak and not right.

Have we been wandering from our thought?

What go ye out into life to see? Surely not a reed shaken with the wind. Far less the man clothed in soft raiment. The prophet; he who, full of the divine life, is true and strong; and he who, intensely

interested in men, is full of sympathy, grace, and tact. Prophets have not always been these; sometimes they have been hard, and under harsh treatment have become embittered, and then they cease to speak for God; but these are the qualities of the true prophet.

Now, if you will, go out into the world and look for such men. You may find one in the heyday of popularity and another in lonely neglect, or perhaps some young prophet who is soon to catch the ears of the people, but who looks not to their applause for his reward. Wherever you discover them, you will see those whom the world to-day needs above all others, men of courage — courage to speak their convictions and to stand by them; courage to meet defeat of their dearest hopes in patience; and, what is sometimes harder, courage to meet success without yielding a hair's breadth in principle. You will find men who esteem public opinion, but who will never become its slave; who are ready, so far as they can consistently, to do what is called the correct thing, but who will always do the right thing; men who will risk popularity to denounce a

sin, and who will be socially ostracized, if that is necessary, to uphold a virtue.

They will be men of hope. No cynic or pessimist was ever a true prophet. Such men live in the ills of the present. But however evil the present may be, the prophet always has God above and behind him, and the conviction that somehow, some day, God's light will break forth before him. The prophets of old to a man pointed forward to the brighter day, to the coming of the Sun of Righteousness.

In all the turmoil of disappointed hopes and unfulfilled ambitions of these days, in the discontent and cynicism of rich and poor alike, in the sins and sorrows and sufferings of our pushing civilization, the voice that needs to be heard above all others is that of the prophet of hope and peace and relief.

Given the man of God, the man among men, the man of courage and of hope, and you have the leader of all true men.

What go ye out for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? a man clothed in soft raiment? A prophet?

Oh, you who are young, whose lives

will be moulded by your leaders; who are now looking here and there to see what career you will mark out for yourself; you who are studying and talking of the leaders of to-day in society, in the professions, in public life, and in literature, listen to the challenge of Jesus: Whom go ye out for to see? Which crowd will you join? Which leader will you take?

III

THE FIXEDNESS OF CHARACTER[1]

SCIENCE is teaching us what the prophets tried to teach the people of their day, that a man's life cannot be cut up into separate parts which have no relation to each other. Life is a living stream, and whatever pours into it becomes a part of its current, either for good or for bad. We must go even farther than this, and recognize the fact that all human life, through its various generations, is bound together, so that each one of us is more or less the result of the past. On this fact was founded the old doctrine of original sin, and on this is based the principle of heredity.

The people to whom the prophet Ezekiel preached recognized all this; but instead of using it as a motive for developing the good in themselves, they made it an excuse for their wrong-doing. "Our

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, March 5, 1893.

fathers, and not ourselves, are to blame for our sins," was their cry. "Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge; the fathers have sinned, and the children are not responsible for their sin." How familiar it all sounds! It is the same excuse that we are hearing every day, — a half truth, which becomes a lie when exaggerated into the whole truth. Therefore the prophet emphasized the other side of the truth, the personal responsibility of each man for his own sins or righteousness.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." [1]

Each one of us, from birth to the grave, is by thought, word, and action building up his life, for bad or for good. Each one of us is giving a set to his character every moment that he lives, either for evil or for righteousness. The thought, then, that I want to bring out

[1] Ezekiel xviii. 20.

is that of the fixedness of character for bad and for good.

Such a truth comes to us rather naturally in these days, when the inexorable laws of nature are so clearly brought before us in our scientific mode of thought. The laws of our body are just as inexorable as are the other laws of nature as seen in geology or in botany. Any abuse of the body, any sin against the laws of health, is going to wreak its vengeance upon the body just as surely as a burn is to make a scar. Whether that sin was committed long ago or yesterday, whether it is unknown to others or not, whether the effects conceal themselves for years or not, the fact stands that the scar is there. Nature has been violated, and nature will reassert itself. I do not know that the scientific habit of mind has any greater lesson to teach us, especially those who are young, than that fact. We know how easily it is thrown aside. The young are strong and vigorous, and their physiques will endure many violations of the laws of self-restraint and temperance without showing the result. Thus they are led to think that the results are not there. What

they want to weigh in their minds is this, that whether the results show themselves or not, they are bound to be. It is in the neglect of this law that people are liable to condone the sins of those who are young, and to say that they are not as bad as those of more mature years. We thus fall into the philosophy that it is the natural thing for the enthusiasms and the high spirits of youth to work themselves off in some form of license or debauchery which would not be endured in older men. So we drop into the habit of expecting that wild oats will be sown, and that there is no help for it. In all honesty it must be said, I think, that when the young are in exceptional conditions, perhaps away from home and without the restraints of family life, they are more liable to fall into temptation, and to do things which they never would have thought of doing at home. Such sins may not have the permanent continuance of those committed in other times of life, because of the temporary conditions. When those conditions have passed, and those special temptations are left behind, the young man will not have the same pressure to continue in the evil

habit. And yet, with this said, the fact stands that the sin is a sin; the violation of nature's laws is a sin; and even if the habit is not continued, for those sins nature will wreak vengeance in some form or other. The young man knows that he has sinned against himself, against his whole education, against his parents' words and his own honor. He is ashamed to think of his life for the past three months in connection with his home. He tries to set it apart and excuse himself by saying that this is college life, or this is city life, or this is life in Europe, and that it is a temporary matter; and that that is home life.

But whether this is temporary or not, the man is the same. He cannot divide himself; he goes from here to there, and the laws of the spiritual and of the physical life follow him wherever he goes; what he does here has its result there. The sin is the same whether under temporary conditions or not, and the results of sin are the same, as far as they affect others. When a man has to-day by his word or example dragged down one of his fellows a step lower in his

ideal; when he has led another to violate his conscience; when the action of a man who has been brought up with pure surroundings is bad, and thereby leads another to degradation: he may go to his home and be as pure as he pleases; he may attend his parish church and receive the communion; he may be counted most respectable and try to be most respectable; but all the time those whom he has left behind, those whom he has touched with the poison of his life, are going into further degradation, and he alone is responsible. The more respectable he becomes, if he is not ashamed of his sin, and if he makes no effort to undo the wrong that he has done, the more of a hypocrite he becomes. In fact, I know of no hypocrisy equal to that of a man who has sown his wild oats, as it is called, who has led others into degradation, and then, tired of that sort of life, settles down as a respectable citizen and a good Churchman, without repentance, without shame, and without the effort to do something to recompense for his wickedness; who sets himself up as a model of social virtue, and speaks with pity or scorn of the degraded men and

women of the city of the same class that he led to degradation.

Whether, then, the sin be temporary, and under exceptional surroundings, the sin is the same in its essence, in its results upon others; and — this is the next point — it is the same in its results upon the man himself.

You know that there are certain chemical properties which in certain combinations make heat, and in others make light, and in others make power. So, sin does not assert itself in its results in the same form, but it reveals itself in the most unexpected ways. An old man, for instance, may be querulous, selfish, and autocratic, and yet he seems to be in his way a religious man. Trace back his life forty or fifty years; and in the yielding to the sins of youth, in intemperance and other excesses, you will find the seeds of this irritability of old age. One would have said that nature would have wreaked her vengeance before and in other forms, but nature is most interesting in the unexpectedness with which she acts.

There is many a man on the border line of chronic sin, of a bondage to some

evil habit, who will not fall into the form of the bondage which others expect; he will not end in the gutter; but he is entering into some form of bondage which will be just as strong as the more open bondage of the drunkard. You know young men who come to Cambridge with high ideals, pure life, and a sensitiveness to the touch of sin, who in the course of six months or a year are different. At first, they have thoughtlessly yielded; then they have gone deeper. Now it is useless to say that they are going to the bad, that they will surely fall into bondage to the lower vices; some of them will, many of them will not. They will recover themselves, and in two or three years, tired of their foolish ways, will settle down. What harm, then, has come from it? Why should n't one pass through this temporary phase of life, if the danger is not great? This harm comes: that every one of them, as they enter into their better and more staid life, will be men of lower tone and of less vigorous character than if they had not sinned. Some result is just as sure as fate. The spiritual laws work with the same exactness as the physical laws.

It is impossible for a man to sin against his ideal, and to hold the same ideal with all the firmness of the past. This is the heavy weight that social life and college life have to bear to-day, that so many men who pass through, and in passing through enter upon some phase of sin, are now living, on the whole, excellent lives, and yet who, because of their own past, do not uphold the high ideal of youth which belongs to youth. They dare not go back on their record and rebuke the sin of which they are guilty, lest they accuse themselves of hypocrisy. So their mouths are shut, or else they yield to the popular idea that these things must be; that a certain proportion of youth have got to go wrong for awhile. It is a lie; for a certain proportion of youth do not have to go wrong. How many go wrong is dependent largely upon the conditions which surround them, upon the ideals which they gain from their home and school life. The moral tone varies in various years, and if the community would lift its standard and its expectation, there would be a lift in the life of all of us.

Here, then, my friends, is the terror

of sin, — in its fixedness. The tendency to sin again is the punishment of sin. The tendency to sin, mark you, not in the same form, necessarily, but in some form. In that incarnate son of sin, Judas, you can see how the same character cropped out first in the fictitious jealousy in behalf of the poor, that the money spent in the ointment should not be wasted, but should be given to the poor; it took another form in his conversation with Jesus. But sin had so fixed itself on his character that when the crisis came, and our Lord pointed him out with the words, "That thou doest, do quickly," Judas rose and went to his work of betrayal as automatically as the drunkard seeks his glass. He was under the bondage of sin all the time, though it showed itself in varied forms, and was finally revealed in the treacherous kiss and the miserable suicide.

I have been taking for the illustration of our truth only one class, the temptations and sins of young men.

But the truth holds just as firmly in all characters, ages, and classes.

The keen business man who concen-

trates his whole life upon business success, in his success finds that nature is wreaking vengeance on the physique and character. The nerves give way early, or the higher tastes and the ennobling thoughts of youth leave him, or he is haunted by the low ambition of increasing his fortune with no purpose for its use. He realizes the foolishness of it, but he cannot help enslaving himself to make money.

The young woman yielding herself to society finds that, when the freshness has gone and others have taken her place, she has been developing a love of excitement which must be satisfied in some form; and she takes to aimless traveling, or emotional religion, or demoralizing novels, or anything to keep up the excitement of life. She has lost the power of repose, and of the quiet enjoyment of life, which is one of the beauties of womanhood.

Sin, then, when it becomes fixed in the character, gives it a set so strong and hard, that in time the character moves like an automatic slave, and the will, the intellect, and the body come into perfect bondage. Do not understand me as

saying that all sin comes to this perfect bondage. But what I do say, even though I repeat it too often, is that every sin has its inexorable result, and will wreak its vengeance upon the spiritual, the intellectual, and the physical texture of the man.

But here arises a question which some of you may have been asking yourselves: Is this the gospel? Do we not hear that Christ came to save us from sin, and that if we will believe Him, and trust in His atonement, our sins shall be wiped out, and we shall be washed in the blood of the Lamb? Is it not possible for the deepest-dyed sinner to claim Jesus as his Saviour, and thus begin life afresh?

Here we must draw the distinction between sin in its relation to man, and in its relation to God. You notice that I have been speaking of the effect of sin in the character. I have not suggested the more important relation, that of the sinner to God; I have not suggested that the essential evil of sin is not first in its results upon the character, but in that it is the separation of a man from God. It is true that the deepest-dyed sinner may repent and turn to God, and

ask pardon in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ. It is true that God, looking into the heart of that sinner, and seeing in it the spirit of humility, hope, and of striving after purity, will look over the sin, will overlook it, as did the father when he received home the prodigal. And the repentant sinner may dwell in perfect confidence and peace with the Father, as did the prodigal for the rest of his life in his father's home. No mention will be made by the Father of the past, no old scores called up, so long as there remains that spirit of submission and dependence upon God's love. So life went on in the home of the prodigal after his return; so life goes on here and in the next world, where repentant children of God trust their heavenly Father.

But think you that the prodigal was ever guilty of the thought that he was as if he had never sinned? Think you that he never looked back with the deepest sorrow at his ingratitude to the father, at his low indulgence, at his treachery to all the ideals that he had gained in his father's home? More than this, must there not have followed him, like a night-

mare, the faces of those whom he had sinned against, whom he had led to sin; who had been the recipients of his bounty and the sharers of his feasts? While he was in his father's home, they were going on and on, down into degradation, they were carrying his words, ay, they were carrying a part of his very self, into the lowest haunts of life; it seemed as if a fraction of his heart had been torn from him and had gone with them. No; his return home, his father's love and pardon, did not undo the past as far as he and they were concerned. There was nothing but to turn to the father again, to gain a renewed pledge of his love, to do what he could to redeem those of the class that he had started down hill, and what he could to redeem himself. His sin was washed out as far as his father was concerned; but as far as he and they were concerned, the sorrow and the effects of the sin still stayed by him and tempered the joy of his whole life.

This brings us on to the other side of the truth of the fixedness of character; "and the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him." Now we take up the truth of the continuity of human

life with a glow of hope and gratitude. Every pure thought, true word, and noble deed turned into the stream of life will tend eternally to purify it. Every temptation overcome is one step towards the victory over another and a greater temptation. Every movement towards the truth gives a momentum to the life which makes the next step more buoyant and strong. Ay, have you ever thought of it as parents, that your hidden thoughts and secret ambitions, if they be spiritual and true, are doing something in behalf of leading the next generation of children towards the truth? Have you never heard one say in excuse for some wrong-doing, that it is so easy for So-and-so to do right, but so hard for himself? Have you not heard another say, in excuse for his selfishness, that it is a wrench for him to give, but as for So-and-so it has become such a habit that he likes to give? And has it never occurred to you that such an excuse is the greatest condemnation that a man can bring upon himself? The glorious thing about the ease of being virtuous, and the pleasure of giving, is not that it leads to this or that virtuous act, or this or that gift; but

that it is a symptom of the character which has for years been tending towards the higher life and the generous impulses, so that when the opportunity comes the act is almost automatic.

One of the leading physiologists of this country, in speaking of the incident of Sir Philip Sidney dying on the battlefield and refusing to take the cup of water which another soldier needed, told me that he did not think it cost Sir Philip Sidney any effort; in fact, he questioned whether Sidney recognized the beauty of the act. On my expressing surprise, he said, "Why, the fact is, that as a physiologist, I believe that the gentle and true life of Sir Philip Sidney, his self-restraint and his almost perfect poise of character throughout the development of his manhood, had gradually led him to a point where he was physically, morally, and spiritually so balanced that it cost him no effort to do any action which we call heroic. It was automatic to him, and herein, not in that act on the battlefield, but in the nobility of his character, is seen the admirable feature of Sir Philip Sidney." What a glorious thing it would be if we should

only begin now, and determining with God's help never to do anything that our conscience disapproved, never to yield one jot from the purity of our best ideals, never to show one sign of moral cowardice beneath the scoff or the silence of our friends, and with all the force of our character devote ourselves to what is pure, true, lovely, and of good report; and gradually gain such poise of character, as we must, if we continue, that purity of word and thought will become automatic, and that every action, under the impulse of this leading motive, will be towards the highest ideals of life.

And what is that, my friends, but the saying, once and for all, "I am going to take Jesus Christ as my example, my leader, my Saviour, and my only test of character? From this time forth I am going to cut myself off from associations which I know are doubtful; from habits which I know are demoralizing, and from acts which I know, however much I may try to deceive myself, will have their bad results in me in the years to come, and I am going to devote myself squarely and honestly to doing what I believe is right in the name of my Master." Do this,

ask God's help, lean upon God for your support, keep the spirit of Christ beside you, and you have given a set to your character which will be like the spring torrent to the sluggish river. That set once made, and your resolution held, you will move on through the stream of life, ever purer and stronger; and in the course of years, who knows what a glorious manhood will be yours?

IV

THE WORTH OF ONE FACT [1]

"He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." [2]

It was a sturdy answer from an honest man. In fact, there is, it seems to me, no character roughly sketched in the Gospel, that exhibits such honest, simple and manly traits as does that of the beggar who spoke these words. He was so frank in manner, so true to himself and his benefactor, so unassuming in his courage and so simple in his faith, that we cannot help being attracted to him and to a study of the secret of his character.

That morning of the miracle, he had waked, as he had every morning from the day of his birth, totally blind. He

[1] Appleton Chapel, Harvard University, December 11, 1887.

[2] John ix. 25.

had groped his way to his customary place on the street, where he might most successfully touch the pity of the passers by. To him, light, color, the beauties of nature and of the human face were unknown things, except as he had heard them described by others. Soon, however, a sound of many feet reached his ears; a crowd was approaching. He is, before he knows it, the centre of observation: for one voice asks, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" The answer comes in words and tone that must have sent a thrill through him: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." "As long as I am in the world, I am the Light of the world." He feels upon his eyes the touch of the marvelous stranger; he goes without question, almost without thought, to Siloam, washes, and on the moment the sun flashes into his eyes. Bewildered, almost stunned, he starts to return, when down comes the crowd upon him; neighbors whose voices are so familiar and whose faces are so strange, Pharisees, all kinds, press on him with their hur-

ried questions: "How were thine eyes opened?" "Who opened thine eyes?" "Where is he?" "Is this, after all, the same man?" "What sayest thou of him?" "It is the sabbath; the healer must be a sinner to heal on the sabbath day." Pressed, dazed, the man holds firmly to one fact. Those questions he cannot answer, where he is, who he is. "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not." One fact in his own experience he does know, and he will stand by that whatever comes: "But one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." No questions or threats can make him deny that. That one fact was in this crisis and bewilderment his salvation, for it was one from his own experience.

This, then, is what I think stands at the bottom of the man's character, his appreciation of the worth of one fact from his own experience. Our study today is therefore the worth of one fact founded upon our own spiritual experience.

Looking back over many young people's early religious life, I think that a rough sketch of their growth may be something like this. The Bible and its

lessons are learned in childhood. They are, of course, accepted on the authority of our parents or teacher. The child grows into maturity. On the same authority the creeds are learned and repeated Sunday by Sunday. The ideas on inspiration, prayer, and many other truths are all accepted, and the boy, now a young man, is called a pattern Christian and a loyal Churchman. The fond hope of parent or teacher is that he is going through life without a suspicion of doubt, holding to these truths which have never by any experience of his own become a part of himself; they have just as little to do with his own inner spiritual experience, if he takes them merely on the authority of others, as has his knowledge of geography or history which he learned at the same time.

Sometimes that fond hope is fulfilled. The boy grows into manhood, and, as he grows, he accepts the truths just as they were given him; he never questions one of them, and by his own spiritual experience he makes them a part of himself. His is an exceptional and a placid, happy experience, without the rough usage, the anxieties, the disappointments of a spir-

itual struggle, and (we must also add) without its satisfaction and its hard won victories.

Far different from that placid life is the experience of most young men in these days.

We have had those truths given us. We have accepted them without deep thought. We have lived on in the comfortable sense that we were all right; we know what a man ought to believe, and what the church through her teachers has told us to believe. The system all seems so nice and strong and respectable — no deep thought necessary — just take the truths and theories as they come.

But some day we wake, we say our prayers as usual, we begin our daily work; when suddenly or gradually the whole thing seems to have changed. An acquaintance comes along and asks, "How can God answer a man's prayer?" "How can He change his laws for one insignificant atom calling himself a man?" We had not thought of it in that way; we had not thought at all, in fact; we had been used to saying our prayers. "It is the right thing to do, all good people do it," we answer, "and —

well" — we have to confess ourselves defeated.

Or, in the subject of inspiration of the Bible. We know what we have been taught; but the questioner presses in; we confess that "we do not see how every word is inspired; it certainly does seem as if there must be some differences of statement between different descriptions of the same scene. Yes; our ideas cannot exactly meet the facts; we shall have to find out about it — and — well," again we are pushed to surrender.

So the story goes; one or another of those beliefs that we had thought so strong and true is hit, and for aught that we can see, riddled at the first fire.

But the real danger is, not that we shall let that one belief go, but as that is wrapped up as part and parcel with our whole system, we shall, in our first bewilderment, let the whole thing go without striking a blow in its defence. Because the enemy have knocked in some ancient and shaky wall around the besieged city, is no reason for the garrison in the well-tried and strongly armed citadel to become demoralized and try to escape with their lives.

Yet this is what we see every day.

A man, because he has had his faith shaken in one or two of his childhood beliefs, immediately calls himself a doubter, as if there were something praiseworthy in the fact that he has surrendered without a blow that which he is bound to hold as long as he consistently can.

Another, who has running in his veins generations of Christian blood, whose whole tone and best traits of character come from a Christian, praying, God-fearing lineage, finds himself puzzled, even bewildered. He cannot answer the questions that press in on him: how a just God can allow such misery as man sometimes endures, or why He permits sin. His brain cannot solve the infinite; and so "he knows nothing," he says, "he makes no pretensions to know or believe anything above or beyond the facts of life," as he calls them; as if God working in man were not a fact of life. He revels in the name of Agnostic, as if there were some peculiar charm in a man's thus easily throwing off all thought of deeper, spiritual subjects.

Do not understand me as saying that

there are not men of honest, earnest, and noble character who, in a most conscientious and courageous way, give up beliefs in which they have been educated and set themselves outside of all positively spiritual faiths. But I do also say that there is a vast amount of weakness and cowardice in men, who, because they have lost something of their old belief, without the trouble of stopping to think, throw the whole thing overboard, and then take it upon themselves to sneer at those who have the mental balance and courage to hold on to what they have until they see good reason to drop it. It is not always the honest believer who is shallow in thought and weak in action, as some would have us think. Far from it.

But when a young man finds himself in such a crisis as we have suggested, when certain ideas have got to go, and he is becoming bewildered, what can he do? What is there to save him?

That which saved the man from the questions of that pushing crowd; one fact caught from our own spiritual experience. It makes but little matter what that fact is, provided only that it is our

own, inwrought into our own thought and life. We must be able to say, "One thing I know," and I tell you it is an immense safety to really know even only one thing. To know, for instance, by your own experience, that it is right every time to do right, and wrong every time to do wrong, is an anchor that holds many a man from drifting into utter recklessness in life; — to know that whatever be the questions about prayer, prayer does give comfort, help, and inspiration; — to know by your own self that whatever be the theory of inspiration, there is a something in the Bible that has helped you as nothing else ever did; — to have tested, not through the authority of another, but in our own life, the real comfort and satisfaction in the forgiveness of one of our sins through faith in Jesus Christ. To have only one such experience to fall back upon, to be so convinced of its reality to us, that we can say that that is one thing which we know, even though the whole world gainsaid it, is to have a hold on spiritual things which is of inestimable value.

Do not believe the theory that religion is a mere matter of the feelings, a blind

unassured trust in something that no one has ever seen, and that therefore has no reality and no certainty. No! faith is the evidence of things not seen, and to the man of faith it is as good as if he had seen.

Granted, then, that we are ready and glad to hold on to even one well-earned spiritual fact, — what will be the effect on us, on our questioners, and on the truth?

In the first place, it sifts our faith in such a way that we immediately recognize what is our own faith, and what is that which we thought was our own, but in fact was not.

When a man has been living beyond his means, and has mortgaged his house and other property, and then meets a financial crisis, he soon finds what is his and what is another's; he comes down to hard facts, and it is a good thing for him. He would have been glad to put off the evil day of bankruptcy, but it had to come, and, in truth, the earlier the better.

When a man has been living on a faith that is not his own, and meets a

spiritual crisis, what was not his disappears; but that which is his, which by experience he had made his own, stands out sharp and clear and true. Some would have the crisis put off; there are timid spirits that would keep a man from thinking and questioning lest the crisis should come. No! it will come; and it is well that it should come before the enthusiasms of life are over.

How that sifting does humble a man! how honest it makes him! Before it, there was nothing he did not pretend to know and believe. He could tell you all about religion. You know men who have the whole thing systematized. There is no question of the deep things of God, of the Saviour, of inspiration, nothing in heaven above or the earth beneath, that they cannot tell you all about, at least to their own satisfaction. To confess ignorance of anything seems to them equal to a confession of defeat. But the man who has passed the crisis is questioned: "How does the Spirit touch the heart of man?" "Where are heaven and hell?" "We know that Jesus was only an enthusiast, self-deceived." How sturdy the answer, "Whether that

be true or not, I do not pretend to say: how many things may be reconciled I do not know; but there are a few facts which are to me as my life, that I do know, and no questionings or sneers can take them from me." The man is thus toned up in humility and honesty, ready to confess ignorance, no less ready and quick to insist on what is to him the truth.

Another effect is seen in the story of the man. Those questions of the neighbors turn into open hostility; the Pharisees have taken the matter up; the healer is a sinner for healing on the sabbath day; therefore the healed man must be thrown out of the synagogue, excommunicated, cut off from friends and old associations. With what quiet, modest courage he bears himself! It was the courage born of firm conviction, a conviction founded on facts.

It is the same story, told a thousand times. Science changes its methods from theory to a study of facts; and with what quiet confidence may she then throw down all theories and superstitions that do not conform to the facts!

St. Peter, before the Resurrection,

may deny his Master; but once sure of the fact of the Resurrection, that same Peter will calmly face and rebuke a whole city of Jews and murderers. It is the conviction of a few simple, but very deep truths that has sent the missionaries all over the world, that has put courage into thousands of men's hearts, and has given every martyr that has ever died for Christ his assurance.

The creed that we recite every Sunday, called the Apostles' Creed, is simply a statement of facts; no theorizing, no inferences, but truths direct from the Scriptures, and more than that, capable of coming direct from every believer's heart. Because our Church has these facts for her foundation, and no elaborate form of belief for her members, we know that she must be a church of courage and missionary spirit. But to come to ourselves. We have these questions pressed on us: "You really do not think the Christian religion is necessary to civilization, do you?" "Has n't the day for Christianity about passed?" Ay! the questioners burst forth into Pharisaic hostility. "Jesus is not even the

ideal man; his religion is a block, a hindrance to civilization. Away with it!"

How is that to be met? Only by quiet, unmoved courage that will dare to assert its conviction in the simple truths of Christ's religion, that whatever comes will be ready to say, "*I know*," and that will be ready to stand by its convictions.

I am not speaking of the future; but now, in these very days, just that courageous spirit is wanted in our different walks of life, in society, in conversation, in our student life; a spirit to simply state its faith, whatever that may be, and firmly live up to it.

One other result must follow. Whatever the faith may be, however limited, if it is a man's own and lived up to, it will be sure to increase.

You may see this by one last look at that man's experience. He was turned out of the synagogue, friendless and homeless, but content with his one conviction, even though he had never seen his healer.

The Saviour seeks him out and asks him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" "Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" is the answer. Jesus

says to him, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." "Lord, I believe," and he worshipped Him.

Because he had that one truth, he was sure to be led on to higher truths.

Faith is not a thing that can stand still; it must grow or die. One conviction must lead on to another, or the first will in time be lost. If a man stands by the truth he has, some day, in some form, Christ, who is the Truth, will pour into his heart another and another. If a man has faith enough to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. Never be content, then, to live and believe only just and exactly what you believe to-day; look for higher and larger things, a deeper faith, a stronger assurance, and a firmer hope. Jesus has promised that he who seeks shall find, and He keeps his promises. He who has given you one truth, will, if you are honest and earnest, if you live courageously up to that truth, lead you on and on, through this life and the next, into all Truth.

V

A SKILFUL DEFENCE[1]

THERE are few chapters in the Old Testament so full of interest and action, so infused with faith and the martial spirit, as are those of the patriot Nehemiah.

Let me recall one incident.

Nehemiah, who happened at the time to be the cupbearer of King Artaxerxes, in his palace in Shushan, hundreds of miles away from his old home, Jerusalem, heard by chance from certain Jews of the desperate condition of that once royal city, the walls broken down, the gates burned, the people dispirited and in great affliction and reproach.

His spirit of patriotism and religion was touched. First brooding over the matter, then seeking the king, he obtained leave of absence for a certain length of time, collected the letters

[1] Appleton Chapel, Harvard University, December 7, 1890.

necessary to pass him through the intervening countries, made a forced journey, and in three days was in Jerusalem. No sooner there than under the cover of night he made a close inspection of the walls, the gates, and the surrounding country. Then, amidst the scoffs of the people outside, he roused all classes of citizens to a high pitch of enthusiasm; he set priests and merchants, apothecaries and goldsmiths, nobles and artisans at work, each man and family in their given place. Soon, to the chagrin of the enemy, the walls began to rise, the gates to be set up, and the city strengthened. Now those without awoke and surrounded the city with a large force; the builders had to become fighters; they that builded and they that bare burdens with one hand wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

Moreover the walls were long and the garrison very small. They had to make up in strategy what they lacked in force. The soldiers were scattered along the wall, and a system of signals was organized. Then, wherever an assault was made by the enemy, there the garrison near by would collect, in order to

strengthen the force of their comrades. "In what place, therefore (so goes the order), ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither to us: our God shall fight for us." [1]

The scene and the spirit of the defence seem to me, my friends, to have some suggestions for our thought this morning. For in these days of questioning, and of open hostility to religion, the call goes forth to every Christian to study more carefully than ever the spiritual condition of the Church and of ourselves, and the problem for us is, in what spirit should that be done, and the citadel defended from her spiritual enemies and ours. The one point that I want to impress is, the necessity of thoughtful skill in the plans and method of our defence, in strengthening those parts where the assault of evil is the strongest.

I need not remind you, who are familiar with the story of the temptation in the wilderness, of the consummate skill with which the enemy of Christ was met; how there was given blow for blow, Scripture quotation for Scripture quotation, an answer to every question;

[1] Nehemiah iv. 20.

how, as the evil power bent all his strength on one point and then on another, the Saviour marshalled his spiritual forces just when and where they were wanted, and how the arch enemy retired vanquished, at least for a season. That scene is typical of the method of his whole life. He is a superficial student who thinks that Jesus went here and there without thought or plan, and praised this man and denounced that one, simply as they happened before Him. There was in our Lord's life no careless action, no wasted power.

That the Church, however, has not always retained that skill and thoughtful method of the Master, it does not take a deep study of the past to discover.

The student of history will find that in every age certain evils were creeping into, and gaining possession of the Church, while the trumpet-blast of her leaders was calling all the thought and action of the Church in just the opposite direction. When bishops and theologians have been bending their whole force upon some question of the exact form of union between the persons of the Godhead, or the distinction between

the human and the divine in Jesus, paganism, with its horde of degrading influences, has been rushing in at another gate. When some question of ecclesiastical government or supremacy has occupied the Church's thoughts, elements have been gathering which would, if they had been looked to, have created a panic in the quiet or argumentative council chambers. It is marvellous, sometimes, to see how dull or prejudiced or blind the leaders of the Church seem to have been. Such immense wastes of power, such loss of opportunities, such misdirected but well-intended action.

And yet, as we have seen lately in the discussions of the battles of our war, it is always easy to be wise after the fight, easy to criticise the methods and actions of the leaders when the smoke is cleared and the strength or weakness of the enemy presented in a careful map before us. It is as easy to laugh at the immense tomes of theology that lumber the shelves of our libraries, at those long ago fights and discussions and formulas, as it is to laugh at the old forts of the Revolution, and the cannon which adorn our commons and monuments. But useless and

ungainly as they now are, they did their work, and most of it good work, in their day. They are interesting in themselves, and helpful in the development of new forms for new exigencies. Each of our creeds bears the scars of many a fight, and has, within it, principles on which the fight against false doctrines and evil powers must continue to be carried on.

We have, however, dwelt long enough in the past.

The Church of to-day is for the life of to-day; her skill is seen in the way that she uses the principles won in the past for the present work. And what is that work?

To hear some good Church people talk, one would think that the final object of the Church is to have a dignified service, an interesting minister, and a comfortable and handsome building; or an elaborately organized parish with a society for every need and emergency possible, or a correct idea of the forms of the ritual and order of the Church. All of these, and many other good things of which we hear much, have their importance: they are all means to a certain

end. The danger is, lest we pay so much attention to the means, to the sharpening and polishing of our instruments, that we forget the great work, the upbuilding of the walls, and the defence. If the whole thought, talk, and force of the Church could be brought to bear upon one thing, the foundation thing, on the person of Jesus Christ; if in these days we — you and I and all in the Church — should cease pressing our pet notions, or discussing our ideas on this or that method, should cease preaching ourselves, and turn thought, word, and life to the preaching of Jesus Christ and him crucified, the fact that not only Jesus Christ did live to warn, help, and heal men in Palestine, but now liveth to warn, help, and heal us; that He is now waiting and watching for our confession of duty neglected and entrance on new duties begun, as He waited and watched of old; that He is as grieved with our cowardly denials of Him, as He was with that of Peter; that He is bearing the load of our sin, — if the Church should preach and realize that, there would be no question that her walls had been strengthened in these days.

The trumpet has sounded in these last twenty years, and has called the thought of the Church to the person of Christ; and she has responded. The strength of the Church and the evidence of her truth is now felt, not so much in the fact that miracles were performed by Christ, or that the canon of Scripture cannot be broken, or that the truth of His system can be exactly proved, as in the fact that Jesus Christ lived: His Life, not His words alone, or His miracles alone, or His resurrection alone, but His Life as a whole, in all its humility, grace, beauty, and power, in all its confessions of union with God, and in its perfect sympathy with man, from Birth to Ascension, was and is the miracle for which no other system can account. Impress that Life on men, burn the story of the Cross into their hearts, and you have given them the one power which will enable them to break with all their evil associations. You have recreated them.

If, then, the people of the Church — if you and I — turn our thoughts intently on the person of Christ, we cannot escape two truths, the two truths which

He placed above all others. First, the truth of God the Father.

To-day we are largely materialists. In other ages there may have been too many spiritualists; but to-day there is no question that we as a people believe most strongly in what we can see, feel and handle. We believe in the power of brains, muscle, material resources, and money. The study of nature need not lead to a want of spirituality, but a close and intent study of nature often does shut out the spiritual side of things. As a result, while thinking, busy, and practical men admire and reverence many of the traits of Jesus of Nazareth, they know little or nothing of the spiritual forces behind Him. The whole drift of the thought and action is such as to create, not so much a denial as a simple thoughtlessness of, and indifference to, spiritual truths. In the theory of many, a God somehow exists; but that a heavenly Father now lives, loves, and longs for the love of His children, — that the spirit of God moving in men's hearts and lives, though they know it not, is the great force in the world to-day, — is a truth totally alien to their ways of look-

ing at things. This agnosticism, not of thoughtfulness, but of thoughtlessness, is not to be reasoned away, for men are not interested enough to reason and think in those lines; it can only be pushed away by breathing into the life of men more of the spiritual spirit, more of the faith in faith and love and higher graces than they now have. In other words, the practical business man, the clerk, the student, the workingman, any one who, while intently interested in his work and pleasure, shows by the tenor of his life that he is living by faith and not by sight; that he really believes in a heavenly Father, and the deeper spiritual truths of Christ, — such a man is doing more to offset and overthrow practical and indifferent unbelief than many an earnest champion of the faith in our books and reviews.

The second is the truth of man, the brother: "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

The man who believes only in the worth and power of material things, reasonably, puts his whole life into the gaining of them. His first duty is to himself; his last duty is to his fellow-

man: he is logical and true to his principles. The society in which that spirit is the ruling power logically expects every man to look out for himself, and, except as a matter of policy and self-defence, for no one else. Let this spirit of selfishness gain full control of all grades of society, without that tempering spirit which comes with religion and faith in spiritual truths, and we shall have a labor question, and a social question, and a political question, to which our present troubles are but whispers. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" is a word which no Christian can get rid of; it is a word which must be interpreted with reason and common sense; but the principle is there. The fact that each member of society and each class of society suspects each other, member and class, of selfish motives is that which keeps society in a ferment; and the trouble is, there is only too much ground for the suspicion. Men have been and are supremely selfish. All classes have at different times unjustly demanded rights and held power which a Christian spirit would have yielded. Consequently, every sharp contrast of riches

and poverty intensifies the suspicion, and the man who spends his ten thousand dollars for a few inches of bric-à-brac, and the laborer who, in combination with a thousand others, has struck in the next street at what they think are starvation wages, naturally eye each other with some suspicion. No instantaneous cure will remedy the matter. It is the spirit of Christ, of tender regard for others, of high justice and sympathetic humanity, that our lives want ; and it is to the Church, — to the members of the Church in their business relations, the treatment of their employees in their shops and factories and their servants in their houses, — to us that the world looks for the noblest expressions of it. In that breach of the principle of the brotherhood of mankind in Christ, of Christian charity, the trumpet sounds to-day, "Resort ye thither."

The battle-cry of the text has its more personal suggestion. Each man and woman is called to stand on the defence against their peculiar enemy, and to enforce themselves in their weak spot. The trouble is that it is far easier to

enforce ourselves in our strongest spot. The temptation of a thoughtless athlete is to strengthen his muscles where they are already the strongest, and thus gain preëminence in some special line. The skilled athlete will turn his thought and force on to the weaker part, and thus develop the whole man in perfect symmetry and strength. The healthy system sends the blood leaping to that part where it is wanted. The sickly body will not respond to the call for aid in its weaker part.

That spiritual system, that man who is in a spiritually healthy condition, will turn the whole strength to his weaker parts. Yet how often is the case reversed!

The man who is always ready to give money, but seldom patient, and often irritable, says that he will turn over a new leaf and be a better man; and he sits down and writes off his generous checks in the satisfaction that he is keeping away the spirit of selfishness. But his form of selfishness is in impatience and irritability; there is the weak point in his garrison.

The church-going worldly woman

keeps Lent by multiplying her attendance at services, and pins her salvation on regular attendance at early communion; but her weak point, a worldly or an envious spirit, goes uncorrected.

The boy makes his good resolutions to be good and not to lose his temper, which he very seldom does lose, and forgets to control his tongue, that unruly member, from impure words.

And so with all of us. The skill of the patriot Nehemiah was in discovering where the weak spot was on the approach of the enemy; then any man could marshal the forces. The hard part is often to look really honestly at ourselves and into our own deepest motives, to discover what is the root of selfishness, and then what form it takes. That done, the warning sounded, the whole spiritual force of the man turned to that weak spot, the fight earnest, and there will be no question of the result; for he who so acts has the assurance, "Our God shall fight for us."

There is one element which I feel is wanting sadly in the Church, and in the Christian character in these times. Of this I would finally speak. On the

whole, the methods of the Church in these days are good, the thought and truths of the Gospel are well supported. Everything seems ready for a more aggressive fight against the thoughtful and practical enemies of to-day. Still we hesitate, and do not move as we ought; many of our weapons are useless; our work is not effective, for want of one thing, enthusiasm born of a personal faith.

Some of you may have read the story told by a private in our war. In the midst of the battle, the plans all laid and in execution, the action hot, one of those critical moments when the turn depends not on numbers but on the confidence and courage of the men, he could feel the courage of himself and his comrades oozing out. The odds were against them; a retreat, perhaps a rout, seemed inevitable, when the figure of Hancock was seen moving slowly in front of the line, every inch of him a soldier. The response to his look and word was immediate. The whole line took courage, rose, advanced and drove back the enemy. I say that we have all the material, all the plans and methods necessary; we

have numbers enough. What we do want is something of that spiritual enthusiasm. It is more than emotion; it is thought, act, and life kindled with that spiritual enthusiasm born of a personal loyalty to the noblest of leaders. Not that the man has got hold of some truth, but that the truth of Christ has got hold of him, and sets him ablaze to kindle that truth in another's life.

You say that your friend is indifferent to religion; that he has no particular faith; he never goes to church. You know also, that it has not come altogether from thought in the matter; he has simply drifted, thoughtless. He merely cares for none of these things. Argument is not going to touch that man. Worship and sermons will not move him, for he avoids them. Books will not convince him, for he skips all that hints at religion. The only thing that will touch him is your own spiritual enthusiasm. If you are loyal to Christ, if you believe in Him as the only hope of your life and of this world, then you have a duty by your friend which you cannot escape. There is not one of us in whom the trumpet call is not for more

enthusiasm. First, seek for yourself a deeper realization of the truth of Christ; seek it earnestly and with prayer; with short prayers if you will, but with earnest ones; then live in the spirit of Christ. Use tact in word and action, but be not over sensitive; an earnest man has sometimes to push his way and break down others' prejudices. And if you are in earnest and with high enthusiasm, others will feel it; they must. Though they say little, they will think. Then, if you continue faithful and sincere, "our God shall fight for us." Leave the result with Him; your work is done.

VI

THE UNCHANGEABLENESS AND THE CHANGEABLENESS OF FAITH [1]

"THEN came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." [2]

When a man asks a plain and honest question, should he not get a plain and direct answer? I think that there are some of us who at first thought have a little doubt in our minds as to whether those people were treated quite fairly by

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, November 20, 1892. Christ Church, Cambridge, before the St. Paul's Society of Harvard University, May 26, 1895.

[2] John x. 24–27.

our Lord. Here was a man who had appeared in the community, and who was certainly worthy of their notice. The people had been brought up for generations in expectation of a Messiah, a Christ, a deliverer. Certain features about this man, His miracles, His claims and the claims of His followers for Him, certain incidents in connection with His birth and early career, the driving of traders out of the Temple just two years ago on that very Feast day, naturally provoked the question, "Is not this the Messiah? Have we not, right here among us, the Christ whom we have been expecting?"

What more natural and honorable thing to do than to go directly to Him with the question, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? How long wilt thou hold us in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly."

Why could not Jesus give them a direct answer? Why did He throw them off in that evasive way, and begin to talk of His sheep? I think that we can best answer the question by suggesting an illustration or two from our own experience in these days.

I have said that we sympathize a good deal with those straightforward business-like men who, in asking a definite question, expect a definite answer. For we are after all a straightforward and business-like people in this age. We live on facts, and like to get at results.

When a new metal is discovered, or a new chrysanthemum cultivated, we can describe its characteristics, name it, label it, and when the definite question is asked, "What is this new discovery?" we can give a definite answer. And ten years hence we can give the same answer. It will always be found exactly the same, in the catalogue of metals or of flowers.

And so in our business-like and scientific way we begin to think that every thing can be defined, labelled, and put in a case, hermetically sealed against changing atmospheres of thought and discussion.

Once in a while, however, some great living principle arises which knocks over all these pleasant notions of preserving truth in unchanging forms and definitions.

In science, some genius who has the

power of classifying other men's facts, some one with the patience and imagination of a Darwin, arises : and from the din of scientific discussion appears the word and the principle of evolution. We do not know exactly how it has come, but here it is ; and immediately ten thousand voices ask " What is evolution ? what does the evolutionist hold ? " And you who have lived in the thought of the last twenty years know how, as soon as that term was defined, as it was supposed by some forever, it has needed a re-definition.

Some new fact or class of facts, some importation of philosophic or religious truth into the discussion, has given the term a larger meaning. So that as it expresses the results of vital thought and experience, as it is the revelation of a living principle, it cannot be defined and confined to one interpretation, but is ever growing larger, and embracing more and more of thought and life in its compass. Thus the evolutionist of to-day is broader in his vision than the evolutionist of five years ago, and narrower than he will be five years hence.

The most misleading thing, therefore,

that science could do to-day would be to give a definite, plain, business-like answer to the plain question, "How long is science to hold us in suspense? Why cannot we have a final answer to our question, 'What is this principle of evolution?'"

Now I believe that we are ready to go back to our text with more intelligence, and see how impossible it was for Jesus to give a direct answer to the direct question: for the more definite and final His answer, the more misleading it would have been.

These people, you notice, were Jews: "Then came the Jews round about him."

It was at the Feast of Dedication. It was an anniversary of liberty, when was celebrated the breaking of the Syrian yoke by the great leader, Judas Maccabæus. It was a day that appealed to the Jewish national pride, when the Roman yoke galled most bitterly. Their dreams and hope were of another and greater than Maccabæus, a Messiah, who would break the power of Rome and make Jerusalem the queen of all nations, and the Jews the victors of all people. Jesus was the Messiah. But as He well

knew, and as we now know, He represented infinitely more than Messiahship.

To have answered that He was the Christ would have been to set those Jews upon entirely the wrong track. The word "Christ" did not mean the same thing to Him and them. He was not the Christ as they understood it. To have said "Yes" would in fact have been a false answer as they would have interpreted it. To have said "No" would also have been false, for He was the Christ, and He could not deny Himself.

And, after all, He had told them, or rather tried to tell them. He had in vain repeated some of the eternal principles beneath the Messiahship: "I and my Father are one," "I came forth from the Father," "I am the Light of the World:" but they believed not; they did not have the spiritual capacity to take it in; even the works that He did had no spiritual meaning to them. They were as hopeless to impress with the truth of his Messiahship as is the ignorant clodhopper to comprehend the great principles involving nature, man, and spirit, under the term "evolution."

Yet there is among us all, even among the very religious, the feeling that religious truths can be finally and adequately defined and settled, so that when the answers to the great questions of God, of the Trinity, of the Scriptures, or of the future life, are once made, they are settled forever. There are those of us who think of the faith once delivered to the saints as a neatly packed system of truths, all dovetailed and mortised into each other, defined and numbered, so that when one has once grasped it, he has it forever in the same form. No! the truth of Jesus Christ is no dead thing, but living, vital, developing with every income of new thought and experience.

Take, for instance, that truth, the inspiration of the Bible. Our fathers defined it, as they thought, forever. The Bible was the Word of God; every word and letter inspired, and equally inspired by Him; one fact wrong, and the whole would fall. To the doubting world crying, "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? Tell us, what is inspiration?" they gave a compact, definite, and satisfactory answer; satisfactory to them.

But we all know how the revelation of God's truth in the very Scriptures themselves, in men's experiences and in the study of nature, has burst those old definitions. How new ones have been formed, and how, again, the living truth has broken the shell! What shall we say? Is the Bible not inspired? Is it not God's word? Surely it is both of these. His Spirit moved in the hearts and lives of those men of old. He was beneath the movements of races and nations. He was in the history of all those peoples, from Abraham, through Isaiah, to Malachi. He, Himself, was in Christ Jesus, and breathed upon the apostles. What, then, those men did and wrote was inspired of God, — not all that they did and wrote. Some of their wicked deeds and words seem to have been inspired by Satan. They had their times of spiritual despondency as we do; they were not equally inspired. We may define inspiration to-day. Our definition is larger, nobler, and more divine than our fathers' definition. Our children's, we trust, will be nobler than ours.

And yet, in this very point, Christian people still cling to the fact that what

our fathers defined must be so. It is just here that the irreverent and Philistine spirit of Ingersollism and the scientific spirit of Huxleyism has its leverage.

They take Christians at their word, that the forms of faith change not, and that the truth must always be defined as the truth always has been; and they easily riddle the old systems, which did good work in their day, but which have already given way to others. Such interpretations are as intelligent as if the theologian should base an argument against modern science on the grounds of the definitions of scientists of one hundred years ago.

Or, again, the question of the Resurrection.

You know the popular belief of fifty years ago, — the soul transported into unknown regions; the body resting in the ground; the great day when all the particles of the flesh would gather and become again the home of the soul, and the man would stand ready for judgment.

You know how the more intelligent study of St. Paul's words, of our Lord's resurrection, and the more spiritual

interpretation of nature, have glorified the truth, cut away the pagan notion of the immortal formless soul, and interpreted man as one, soul and body; and how the resurrection is the entering into the higher life with spiritualized aspiration and form. Very imperfect, our definition, you say. Yes, gloriously imperfect, with every new revelation of truth to be made more perfect.

"Do you believe in the resurrection of the body? Tell us plainly. Does the Church ask us to believe it? Give me a final answer, that will settle my doubts and free me from thinking any more about it."

Can we answer definitely and in a word?

We say "Yes." Ah, — but what do you mean by the body, by the resurrection; and we are misunderstood. We say "No," — not the exact unchanged body that was laid in the ground, and yet we believe in the resurrection of the body; and again we are misunderstood.

And the business-like, impatient inquirer goes away, saying that we do not know what we believe. Is the fault in him, or in us? Surely the faithful Chris-

tian knows that he is now living in Christ; that when he dies he is still living in Christ; that as Christ rose and Himself ascended into heaven, a spiritual state, so we shall rise, and, clothed in spiritual form, we shall dwell with Him.

"Ah!" — I can hear the sigh from some quiet, faithful Christian. "Is religion such a moving, changing, restless thing? Am I never to rest in my faith, with the assurance that I shall have to struggle and search and develop no longer?" I know how, in this intellectually restless age, that dread hangs like a cloud over many lives. "I have broken with my child faith. I had to. I have a more mature faith now. It is, I know, better than the old; but have I got to move again? Ever this onward, upward march? Ever this testing of new truths and larger revelations?"

We know how that spirit, weary of tossing upon the tides of thought, has driven many to Rome and many more to agnosticism.

Are they right? Is the true religious life a tossing on the tides of thought? Are change and movement the necessary characteristic of faith? Yes, and no.

"Am I always to be putting forth new limbs?" cries the tree. "Am I to be forever swinging in the wind? Ever responding to the rain and suns of summer? Yielding foliage and fruit, dropping them, and yielding again?" Yes, by all means, yes, if you are to live. And yet your roots buried deep in the earth, clinging to rock and clod, hold you fast, nurture you, give you stability and life.

Is the ship to be forever tossed upon the sea, buffeting winds and waves? Yes, by all means, yes, if she be a true ship; but within her are the needle, the helm, and the pilot that keep her true. Perpetually moving, yet never changing in loyalty to the hand that guides her. Herein is her safety. Let her lie at anchor in the harbor forever, and barnacles, rust, and decay will be her lot. Herein is her glory, that she is doing the work for which she was launched, making harbor after harbor for which she is directed.

Have you not now caught the thought? If not, you may catch it in the very answer of Jesus to those same Jews. "I told you and ye believed not. But ye

believed not because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." The basis of the Christian faith, the root of the Christian life, the compass and pilot is in the personal love of the man for Christ : the sheep and the shepherd.

It was of no use to answer the Jews, for they had not love. He would have liked to answer them, but while they had not that, they could not understand Him. He did answer the woman at the well, and many a humble man, because they did have that.

Herein is no change, any more than the tree changing its limbs. The Christian faith is unchangeable, as the child's love to his father is unchangeable, rooted deep in affection, in devotion, and experience. The Christian believes in the deeper truths of God, in the essential facts and principles of Christ life ; his existence is bound up with them. And yet the Christian faith is changeable, as the child's love for his father is changeable. With growth from boyhood to manhood, the son interprets his father's love more intelligently, grasps the best elements of his father's character more

strongly, and they both rejoice in the maturing expression of his devotion.

Surely no one would ask that the form or expression of the filial love would remain in the young man as it was in the child.

Herein is the unchangeableness and the changeableness of creeds. The true creed, like that which we have just recited, contains the few fundamental expressions of the Christian faith. If more than these are expressed, the rising life of Christian thought is bound to shatter the expressions, as it is now doing among the Presbyterians and in some of our Congregational churches. Yet, while our simple creeds remain the same, and while our personal faith remains deeply imbedded in these truths, who can but say that our interpretation of these symbols is continually maturing and enriching? For instance, "I believe in God the Father." What wealth of love, sympathy, and personal communion is now read into that expression, when the fatherhood in the home is so much more loving than in the days when fathers were more nearly commanders than fathers. How much more the sentence,

"Jesus Christ his only Son," means to us than it did a few generations ago, when a partial theology had robbed Him of many of His most human and attractive qualities. What added meaning is there in the statement, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," when we have passed from the mechanical idea of the Spirit into the realization of Him as the personification and source of all moral and spiritual power? How much we now mean as we speak of the ever adorable Trinity, which our fathers were ignorant of. That doctrine is no longer a mere logical problem, but the imperfect expression of a vital spiritual truth.

What, then, is the meaning of those people who say that we want definite teaching, definite dogma, and a definite faith? If by this is intended such teaching, dogma, and faith, that the statement will be final and comprehensive, so that the receptive hearer may take it and rest assured that he has never got to think out problems or struggle with new questions, then, by all means "No!" We want no company of Jews who think that Christ will tell them

everything plainly and finally. Jesus never did; for no man ever lived who could grasp a final and complete statement of even the least of God's truths. Calvinism and Romanism have both tried it, and have both miserably failed. Calvinism has been shattered, and Romanism has been driven to the development of dogma, to the invention of new and unchristian dogma, in order to keep the ship from going to pieces.

When, then, you become weary of thinking out religious questions; when you yearn for some one — some minister, some church, some book — to tell you just what you ought to believe, so that you may not have to think any more; when you long for some haven of rest from the turmoil of religious doubts, look well to yourself whether it be not the haven of spiritual and intellectual death. Escape from the stress of life, seek the garden in the cool of the evening; aye, sleep on now and take your rest. Meanwhile the enemy is scheming and coming forth; they are close at hand that would betray the Saviour.

But if by definite teaching, dogma and faith, a man means that he wants to

bring more clearly before him the deepest truths of Jesus Christ and His Church, then by all means, seek for that faith.

First, enter more and more deeply into sympathy with the life, the spiritual aims and the character of Jesus Christ; throw yourself devotedly into His service. By prayer and close communion, enter into the very heart of God, as the child lays hold of his father's heart. By study of Scripture, of man, of history, and of nature, seize hold of the very life of God. Questions will rise, doubts dim the vision for a while, temptations trip the feet; but when one is walking beside the dearest friend he has, when one is learning of him and drinking in the richest truths, is he to grumble at the cloud mist and a rough path?

Here is the glory of it all, my friends. There are those who are, or think they are, safe in the Church, in authority, in restful, unthinking faith. There are others, intellectual or spiritual laggards, or cowards — some of them, not all — who have retreated into unthinking agnosticism. They have given up the whole work of trying to discover God. And there are others, Christians, who have

opened their hearts to Jesus Christ and have let God discover them. They have undertaken to follow Jesus, not because it is easiest, not because it saves them thought and intellectual worry, but because a life with Him and in Him is a glorious life. It is the life of one who has found the truth, and definite truth. Not the whole truth, — no, a thousand times no ; not a complete or final statement of truth, but truth enough and definite enough to live by. Thus he has before him the vision of a glorious eternity : with Christ as a companion, a guide, a comforter in distress, to enter into the path of the truth-seeker ; in the presence of God to enter more and more closely into the thought and knowledge of God ; rewarded every day with heavy sheaves of truth gathered under sunny and cloudy skies, in joys and sorrows, but ever expecting and gaining richer rewards.

And so life goes on with us here. You know that each day and year that you live in company with Christ brings new knowledge of Him. You know that doubts and difficulties which looked insoluble, and which were insoluble, if

interpreted without the Christian faith, have solved themselves in the light of His life.

Oh, the pity of it! — that men and women, thousands of them about us, capable of the highest spiritual life, and the noblest character, should live and go to their graves without realizing the beauty, the comfort, and the grandeur of the Christian faith. Oh, that we could move them to it, and bind to it with chains of love!

And then the glory of it! — the glory of an endless life in the boundless love of Jesus Christ; of walking in the Temple of Truth with the Truth Himself as its interpreter; the infinite comfort in sorrow and inspiration in joy that the same Master and Friend and Brother is leading us here that will lead us into His eternal truth and life forever!

VII

THE PRIESTS' TAUNT [1]

SOME of the noblest truths have been concealed within the taunts and scoffs of men. It was in derision that the courtiers and people of Queen Elizabeth's day gave to a group of men of extreme purity of life the name "Puritan," a title which their descendants have been proud to acknowledge.

Or again, there arose another group, who, reacting from the ceremonialism and the worldliness of the Established Church, developed a phase of religious life which emphasized the indwelling of the Spirit; and as they quaked with emotion, while the Spirit moved them, they were given the derisive name of Quakers, a title which with all its eccentricities has been associated with tranquillity, courage, and the spirit of peace.

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, March 19, 1893.

On the road outside Jerusalem hung the body of a Galilean peasant upon a cross. Art and fiction have given the scene a touch of picturesqueness which it did not have in reality. The man who hung there was, in the eyes of those who held the law in their hands, a felon, justly crucified. To be sure, some months before, He had shown unique powers; He had lifted the sick from their couches and called the dead from the grave. There was something about Him which had appealed to the common people and to the degraded. He had made for Himself high claims; but to those in power, He was an impostor, a blasphemer, and a deceiver.

His trial was past, and He had been led out. The first agony had been endured; death was coming fast upon Him. To those beneath the cross it was incomprehensible that one who had power over the lives of others, and who had saved them, should not be able to save Himself. No wonder, then, that the chief priests threw the taunt into his teeth, that what He had done for others, He was unable to do for Himself. "Likewise also, the chief priests, mocking him with the

scribes and elders, said, he saved others, himself he cannot save." [1]

As we hear these words, however, we repeat them again and again with a glad satisfaction, that there hung one who, though a fool in the eyes of the spectators, was in his very foolishness giving to the world the supreme example of self-sacrifice. We think of those men as utterly depraved, that when such a spirit of courage and sacrifice was before them, they could not appreciate it. We class Jesus and the priests as a part of the history of early days, and we find it almost impossible to realize that those two contrasted spirits, especially that of the priests, exist in our lives here and to-day. As we look, however, a little deeper into the principles of those two phases of character, what were the essential elements? On the one side was one who entered this world simply to devote himself to the saving of his fellowmen; on the other, we have men who, respectable and respected by the community, religious in their way, counted good standing and one's own life as the dearest thing in the world.

[1] Matthew xxvii. 41, 42.

We now come to life to-day. I wish I could put it in the form that would seem real and natural to you; but let us suggest these for our illustrations.

A young man graduates from college, of ample fortune, of excellent social standing, with high prospects for the increase of his fortune in business and the widening of his education by travel, or for a life of leisure. Instead of taking up with these opportunities, he does not enter business, nor travel, nor loaf; but to the surprise of his friends, and under the deep realization that in the present stress of civilization, men of the finest temperament, of the best education, and high social standing are needed to save men from sin and degradation, and the community from injustice, he devotes himself, not in a spasm of emotion for a year or two, but for a lifetime, to the personal work of saving souls. His classmates lose sight of him, he is never seen at the club, he is in with an entirely different set of people; he is down in the lowest street in the slums, living there. When he is fifty years old, and his friends are sleek and contented in their routine, he is aged and gray and careworn. There is not

the slightest touch of romance to be found about him; he has simply been doing a hard and thankless piece of work. His friends, as they discuss his life, wonder what he has done that for. Here were opportunities which he has thrown away, friendships which he has lost, happy years which have been nothing to him, and what has he to show for it? Nothing but an endless run of committee meetings and charity associations, and a long story of discouragements, reformed men who have broken their pledge, boys whom he has worked over who have turned out badly. While, to be sure, he has been successful in certain ways, exactly what ways or how successful they know not and care little. "Why," his friends say, "he has spent his whole life in trying to save others, and he has not taken the trouble to save anything for himself, either in the way of comfort or pleasure or money." Do we not herein catch a note of the priests' surprise or derision? He has wasted his life saving others, and he has not had the sense to save anything for himself.

Occasionally, some woman of high

rank breaks from ordinary associations of life, and enters with all devotion into the work of saving souls. She does not mind if in the doing of this she offends the conventional ideas of her class. How quickly, however, comes the criticism, — the suggestion of eccentricity, or of ambition, or emotionalism; how prone we are to suspect of fanaticism any one who breaks out from the conventional circle and takes up, with a complete devotion to Christ, the work for humanity.

As we see such careers in the vista of history, and hear their names as they have been canonized by the Church, and catch a glimpse of their faces in the stained windows, there is a picturesqueness to the careers. But if we had lived in the days of those saints, we would have found the same commonplace features that we find in the devoted of to-day. We have not got to go back a half century to find those, who, having thrown away their fortunes and positions in behalf of humanity, have met from a large part of the community the taunt of the priests; they have been called eccentrics, or fanatics, or fools, or knaves.

But, as I have already said, as soon as

the picturesque feature of self-sacrifice appears, it appeals to us in a way that the commonplace self-sacrifice cannot.

Still, even in the name of picturesqueness, Christian self-sacrifice has a claim upon the civilization of these days. There is, as we well know, a common impression among the finely cultured, the over-sensitive, and the artistic, that the Christian religion is rather a commonplace affair. We hear a good deal about the Philistinism of the religion of the middle classes, of the crudities of some of their worship, of the vulgarity of the Salvation Army, and of the nasal voice of the exhorter. We are familiar with the taunt that the religion of these days is very commonplace and uninteresting. But after all, my friends, is not life on the whole, if looked at from the picturesque point of view, very commonplace and uninteresting? There is nothing that touches us or our finer natures in the ledgers and in the stores and in the thousands of dressmakers and shopkeepers; the whole thing is commonplace, if we must look at life from that point of view.

On the other hand, this fact stands,

that with all the commonplaceness of religious life, it affords, in this generation, as it has in all the generations since Christ hung upon the cross, the most beautiful, the most picturesque, the most unique features of courage and of self-sacrifice.

Is it not so? Do not even those who pass a dilettante life in the study of art and literature and in the reading of novels, who rarely stir themselves to any self-denial of their own, but who turn with avidity to the picturesque self-sacrifice of others, do not they turn to Christian art and to Christian history to get their blood stirred with the noblest act of self-sacrifice? Is it irritating to be obliged to appeal to Christian self-sacrifice on the ground of picturesqueness? Certainly, it is not a high appeal; but if that is what some people count as the most interesting and most enviable thing in life in these days, then let us who are Christians claim that for Christ. And from the romantic stories and martyrdoms of the missionaries of the last twenty-five years, from the story of Gordon, and Damien, and from the instances of devotion in all countries of Christen-

dom, let us claim for Christianity a picturesqueness and an interest and a romance which is brilliant and glorious as compared with the dull cynicism of an over-ripe culture.

Here, now, we come to the truth; that at some time or other, one has got to make his choice between the spirit of the priest and the spirit of Christ. We are all conscious of the same effort to hold the spirit of both, but it is an impossibility. We have got to save others, or save ourselves. Life must have its compensations. There cannot be gains without losses, or losses without gains. The soldier who cares to have his name cut in the tablets of Memorial Hall as a call of patriotism to the coming generations cannot have that glory and at the same time save his life. The scholar who is intent upon the discovery of some deep truth, and who will have that truth, even though he deny himself what others call the very essentials of life, must be content to risk his health, comfort, pleasure, and fortune, and to lose them, if by so doing he can gain the truth. In other words, to come back to one of the fundamental facts of

life as well as of the philosophy of Christ, if a man will lose his life for others, he will find it, but if he is bent on finding only his own life, he will be sure to lose it. In all the intricacies of modern civilization, the variety of motives, the multiplicity of rewards, it is very difficult in practical life to keep this fundamental distinction clear; but there it is, and it is the part and the duty of every man to use his reason and his character in order to try to discover what for him are the lines of movement in the carrying out of the principle.

I want now to speak rather plainly as to a few of the duties which, as it strikes me, the Christian life of to-day lays upon us. I am not going to say a word that is not familiar to you all, and yet it may be that the emphasis of a familiar word will come with some added force.

The fact is that there are certain questions and sorrows and sins facing us in these days that have got to be met. They are not going to be met by pessimists or cynics; they are not going to be met by those who are sitting in easy chairs, and bemoaning the degraded

condition of politics and of society; they are not going to be met, in fact, in any way but by an enormous amount of self-consecration and self-sacrifice on the part of Christian people.

Ingersoll and his followers may scoff at Christians and their selfishness, and they may have good reason to do so, but neither he nor his followers are found working in the city slums. When work is to be done, it is to the Christian world and to the Church that modern society has got to turn, and has a right to turn, and to them it does turn. Now these facts are staring us in the face: that there is in our large cities, and in the same proportion in our smaller cities, and in equal if not in greater proportion in our country towns, a horde of degraded and vicious people; — we may call them the offscourings of other nations, or the degraded of our own; you may speak of them in the North as hoodlums, or in the South as poor whites, the fact stands that here they are; — that there are drunkards and fallen women by the tens of thousands; that our poor-houses, our insane asylums, and our state prisons are crowded as fast as we build them; that

the increase of our cities is herding our population in a way that sends a shock through our natures; that the sweating system is with us, as it was in the London of Dickens and Charles Reade; and that only a small fraction of our population is found inside of church on Sunday, and that a very large fraction is going without any practical or effective knowledge of Christ at all.

"This is true," you say, "but this is only one phase of our modern civilization." "It is peculiar to large cities." "We are on the whole improving; we have our public schools and our churches and our charitable organizations, as a constant force towards the uplifting of the community." Again I suggest that while the masses may be in the larger cities, the same features are everywhere. There is not one of the evil features that I have mentioned which we associate with East London and New York and the North End of Boston, and which we say should be eradicated in those cities, which does not exist in this city of Cambridge, in its proportion. "Ah! but then, the legislature is at work on some of these questions, and the experts are studying

other features of them; the reformers and the doctors are putting their shoulders to the wheel, and the ministers are in the midst of the battle; we hear of the increase of charity institutions and university houses. Surely the people are doing a great deal." Yes, they are doing a great deal; but who are the legislators and charity workers, unless they be a few of the great body of the people? They are no class by themselves, set apart for such things. They are ordinary men and women just like yourselves, who, losing some of the chances of fortune, are trying to do something for somebody else.

What, then, I want to say, is that the men and women and the children of the degraded, of the pagan and of the outcast, have got to be saved; and in the name of civilization and of Christ, somebody has got to help. And that help is not going to be given by spasms of emotion, or by reading the newspapers and the periodicals, or by an occasional half-hour; but by determined and life-long self-sacrifice.

In the first place, any man or woman who has not upon him a deep sense of

responsibility for the salvation of somebody else, who throws it off as soon as he puts his hand into his pocket and has given some change to the beggar or a few hundred dollars for the employment of the unemployed, who has no idea of bringing his life into personal contact with the life of some one who needs it, who is not ready to give up some of the pleasanter features of life in order that he may lay a hand to this immediate work, even though he be confirmed and a communicant a dozen times, has not in him the first element of Christ's spirit.

This, of course, is true, that special lines of work have got to be taken by men and women specially trained and devoted to that work. But the question that I ask is, Why should not there be, in a community like this and in a congregation like this, one person or another, here or there, who determines with the fullest consecration that they will give their life for such special work? In every group of young men, there are one, two, or half a dozen who have fortune enough not to call them to enter business, who are free enough to be

men of leisure, and who may be men of leisure if they be not something far nobler, — men of devotion. This, it seems to me, is one of the highest calls of heroism for the next generation. The past generation had its call in the war, and it is wonderful to think what those young men did, what tremendous concentration of power there was, how unknown elements of character sprung forth at the bidding of the country. As Phillips Brooks once told me, the morning after he had passed an evening with the Loyal Legion and heard the talk of the veterans, "Why, the war was fought by a lot of boys! They were all so young!" And as we think of the undeveloped powers and devotion and self-sacrifice that are resting in this community now, our imagination can hardly reach the possibility of work that might be done, if a fraction of them would throw themselves into the salvation of some of the people of this generation, as did those of the last for the saving of the nation.

Why should not, then, a young man give himself, not necessarily to the ministry, but to the skilled, intelligent, and

devoted work of some phase of social uplifting, and in the name of Christ throw some of the compensations of life away in order that he may gain the higher compensation of souls won to purity and to Christ?

I make the same appeal to the women. One is bewildered by the opportunities; and one sometimes feels as if the emergency were such that a good part of the community might well turn their hand towards special work calling for special skill and devotion.

"Ah!" you say, "is there no danger of unsettling us? Most of us have our home duties, families to support, children to bring up, aged parents to care for, ties which are as sacred to us as any of these obligations." True, and no call of Christ's can ever be stronger than the call to devotion in the homes. None of us have sympathy with philanthropists who neglect their home duties for society's welfare, and thus undo the very work they are trying to do. Do not understand me as depreciating the charitable and religious work that is being done by the thousands of men and women who have their home duties. It is one

of the hopeful features of the day, the number of people who go from their homes to pass a few hours each week in work for others. The very fact that they come from a home and are not specialists gives a charm and an atmosphere to their work. This is all good and great.

But I have tried to put in strong words the call for special work by those who have the freedom to enter it.

And now let me close by speaking also for the call for the home-work by those whose duty keeps them at home. The whole question resolves itself, it seems to me, into this — into the spirit in which we undertake our home duties. Is it with any narrow sympathy or social ambition that we devote ourselves to our duties there? Are we bringing up our children simply with a hope that they are going to be a little better than we are? Or have we, deep down, as our commanding motive the full spirit of consecration, that we shall throw ourselves into our home-life in order that we may do the very best that we can for God and for humanity, in order that we may bring our children up, not in the

narrow horizon of what is called society life, but in the wider horizon that society life is not for its own amusement, but for the cultivation and the uplifting of the whole society?

Have we for the highest motive this, that our children — or if we are young, that by our example, our younger brothers and sisters — shall be completely devoted to leading a life after Christ; that they shall do everything in their power to touch this one and that one with the spirit of Christ? In other words, have we it on our minds that the great work of life is not to keep well fed and clothed and pass life smoothly, but to help other people to try to make other people better, to save other people? Have we it as our supreme privilege to bring other people to the life in Christ at the cost of our own pride and self-satisfaction? Have we as the highest word that can be spoken of us, the scoff of the priest, "He saved others, but as for himself, he has thrown away what we call the pleasures and satisfactions of life; he has not saved himself?"

VIII

THREE CHARACTERS [1]

You recall the story that is told in the fifth chapter of the Acts about the release of St. Peter and the other apostles from the prison into which they had been put by command of the high priest, the report of the officers that their former prisoners were teaching in the Temple, the second arrest, and their appearance before the council of the Sanhedrim.

It is of this council, or rather of three different characters that appear in it, that I want to speak this morning. These are the high priest and Sanhedrim, Gamaliel, and the apostles. For, in our study, I think we shall find they stand for something more than themselves. They represent three types of character which are found in every age or council of men where a new truth is called in question. My hope, therefore, is

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, April 26, 1891.

not to study and leave these men in Jerusalem, but to bring them into the midst of the questions and councils of to-day.

In the midst of a people who were conservative by nature and history, and who took a pardonable pride in their religion and the deep truths that had been revealed to them, there suddenly appeared a small group of men proclaiming a new truth, a Messiah; one who was to do away with the old régime, and set up a new, a larger, and a truer spiritual kingdom. And, as if to add insult to injury, these teachers of new doctrine had thrown upon the representatives of the old order the responsibility of the crucifixion of their Master, who, however, had risen again, and now, in the person of the apostles and the power of His Spirit, was ready to renew the struggle.

As, then, we enter the council in imagination this morning, the first characters that call our attention are the high priest and the members of the Sanhedrim; for in position they are most conspicuous, being the judges, and in strenuousness of voice they drown the words of the others.

In such a deliberative assembly, a shrill or strident voice usually betokens weakness on the part of the speaker. He either lacks confidence in the strength of his argument or his method of treatment, or he wants faith in the supremacy of truth. He therefore is driven to substitute noise for reason, epithets for arguments, and force for persuasion.

These were just the weak points of these so-called judges and interpreters. They have been and still are the weak points of their successors in character to this day.

We have, for instance, inherited the beliefs of our fathers, and we treasure them. But new phases of truth appear; the discoveries of science call on us to readjust our ideas as to the antiquity of the world and of man. The students of history appeal to us to change our views as to some of the books of the Old Testament, and our theory of the inspiration of the Bible. It may be that the movement of our thought calls upon us to sound deeper depths than these, and to test the fundamentals of our faith.

At all events, new phases of truth in all directions make a demand that each

of us shall think, judge, and discriminate. How shall we meet those who in all sincerity bring forth these new phases? The two methods which the followers of the Sanhedrim used have been tried again and again, and have failed.

Force in suppression of truth must necessarily fail. Every time that you attempt to imprison those who have a word to say for truth, and every time that you try to shut down the latest discovery, you have over again the history of the apostles. In some mysterious way the prison doors are opened. No earthly keepers, no Roman emperor, no soldiers of the Vatican, no condemnation or burning of heretics, whether a Galileo, a Servetus, or a Huss, has succeeded in suppressing their voices. Sometime, it may not be for generations, it is found that God's angel has thrown open the prison doors, and that their voices are heard in the great temple of the world's thought and activities.

The ashes of the body of Wycliffe, cast into the brook, tell in familiar parable the story of all such effort: —

"As thou these ashes, little brook, wilt bear
Into the Avon, Avon to the tide

Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,
Into main ocean they, this deed accursed
An emblem yields to friends and enemies
How the bold teacher's doctrine, sanctified
By truth, shall spread, throughout the world dispersed."

The Church is discovering by experience, though occasionally we are warned that the discovery is not complete, what she might have learned centuries ago by heeding Christ's words, that truth cannot be suppressed by force: "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight."

Failing this, the Church and Christian people have not yet freed themselves from another dangerous and useless weapon of suppression. To-day public opinion wields the power that armies of trained men used to have. And popular prejudice may, if skilfully played upon, fulfil the work of the sword and stake.

It was a weapon which the Jewish priests and the Pharisees knew how to wield, as they led the people on to demand the crucifixion; it is a weapon which men and women who love their own opinions more dearly than the truth wield skilfully to-day.

A new phase of thought makes itself heard in a community. Earnest and pure-minded men and women, whose intelligence gives them a right to speak, stand sponsor for it. Whether it is true or not may be in doubt: but that it has a right to a hearing and a deliberative judgment would seem to be hardly an open question. Yet, almost before its statement is made, before men know exactly what the new doctrine is, the appeal to popular prejudice begins: epithets are bandied about. Because one does not believe about the Scriptures as his neighbor does, he is said to be throwing away the Scriptures; because one is, as far as he understands it, a believer in evolution, he is called an atheist; because one does not hold certain views about the ministry, or it may be about some detail of ritual, he is called "no Churchman," and so on in wearisome iteration.

These are not exaggerations. Within a few weeks I have had a young man come to me in distress, because he had been told by a Christian friend that he was an unbeliever. And on inquiry I found that the reason for such an accu-

sation was that the young man did not believe that the world was made in six days.

And the fault is not all on one side. If Christian believers and conservative supporters of the faith are to blame for substituting prejudice for argument, the unbeliever meets the same temptation. What shall we say of a man like Mr. Huxley, who, respected and an authority in his own pursuits, systematically blinds his eyes to the movements of Christian thought, and perversely interpreting the Scriptures and Christian truth after a method now discarded by the leading religious minds, appeals to popular prejudice against Christian truth?

Have we not in such a spirit the type of the high priest and the Sanhedrim, just as clearly as we find it in the petty religionist who misinterprets science for his own purposes?

No, my friends, the whole business of suppression of thought by epithet and appeal to prejudice shows lamentable weakness of faith in the truth that we hold. If we are afraid to have our creeds and our dearest faiths meet the open light of day, if we must hold them

away from examination and criticism, then we may well question if they are God's truths; for how can the truth itself be afraid to meet the face of the truth-seeker? Shall we not rather welcome him as a friend on the same quest for truth?

When, then, my friend, you find yourself casting an epithet at one with whom you disagree, when you are about to suppress his statement with a slur at his unbelief or at his orthodoxy, check yourself. Ask yourself, is it worthy of the truth to treat it so? is it worthy of yourself? does it betoken a confidence in your truth, or a latent weakness of faith? Persuasion, not oppression, is the weapon of the faithful.

How different, then, is the large faith and the confidence in the truth of one member of the Sanhedrim, the second subject of our study, Gamaliel, — Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul in his youth, the most learned and respected of the Rabbies; the only one of them all who had the courage to allow his students to read the Greek authors; a man whose studies and experience had given him a

large vision of truth, and therefore a wide charity and tolerance of varied forms and interpreters of truth.

The sharp words of the others, betokening their weak position, sound in the hall, and their querulous accusation is repeated, "Did we not straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." Then, in response to the challenge of Peter, "We ought to obey God rather than men," they add violence to accusation and take counsel to slay him.

How strong, deep, and reassuring is the word of the great teacher! Gamaliel appeals to their experience and to their deeper faith. God has His truth in charge. Theudas and Judas were once new and popular lights, but their error carried their own condemnation; they both perished, and their followers were dispersed. Why, then, when God had thus justified Himself, should the Sanhedrim now undertake to anticipate God in this doubtful matter? "Now I say unto you, Refrain from these men and let them alone: for if this counsel or

this work be of men, it will come to naught. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

It is the word of a true philosopher. For the wider our experience and the larger our vision, the slower will we be to dogmatize on the truth or error of any given man. Truth sits at the helm of life; why not trust her? Why should we go rushing about here and there, trimming our sails to every little flaw of wind? Why should we feel it necessary to set our judgment on every little movement which seems to be for or against our interpretation of the truth? Why try to head off every little symptom of heterodoxy in the Church, and to suppress every man, be he small or great, who thinks that he has discovered something? Take things in a philosophic spirit; have such confidence in the final victory of God that you will not chafe and fret at the loss of a little skirmish.

There is a great truth in all this. Gamaliel is great. This Gamaliel spirit finds its home in universities and centres of wide thought and experience. It is one of the great conserving influences

which Cambridge has sent and still sends through the country, this faith in God, that will allow God, through His chosen servants in civic and religious and social life, to quietly and gradually reform society and lead men to higher visions and nobler ideals. It is a calm faith which is at once the support and the irritant of the ardent reformer. The enthusiast accepts the fact of God in charge of the truth, but he chafes at the slow movement and at the calm spirit of those who seem to be content to have it slow. "If the thing is not of God, away with it," cries the ardent practical worker. "If of God, support it." Action, enthusiasm, is his motto. "True!" answers the philosopher, "but time and experience must assure us which is of God, and which not; be patient; trust God."

Noble and assuring as all this is, can you not see the weak spot in it? weak just where Gamaliel was weak; and just where men and institutions of wider vision are weak to-day.

Apart from the rush and strivings of practical life, they give their calm judgment, and then shrink from taking part

in the action. Let the high priest scold and the apostles suffer, the truth will result in the end. Let the small men of activity to-day struggle in their restless way with the problems of life. Whether this or that form of reformation is the best; whether Christianity or cultivated paganism is to rule in society is an open question; whether gambling is harmless or degrading is an interesting problem; whether intemperance in our communities is to be lessened by this or that method is not easily decided; but however these things are settled, God has His truth in hand; things will come out right in the end, and the ultimate result will be for truth.

Thus practical indifference takes the place of a noble faith, and a cultivated ease finds its justification in a great truth, and the great philosopher becomes the patronizing critic of his age and surroundings. Gamaliel uttered his noble thought, and then sat calmly by, while innocent men who spoke for what they believed to be the truth were cruelly beaten. He spoke for fair play, and then would not lift a hand to see that fair play was given.

And the Gamaliel of to-day sits in his study or his chair at the club, and talks of large problems of life and elevation of politics and saving of the degraded; he is the patron of truth in all forms; he has nothing to say for Christ or against Him; in his superior judicial position, he is anxious only to see that all ideas have a fair chance; but what he needs to make him a full man is to test some of his large thoughts in action, and to be ready not only to talk, but to suffer for the truth's sake, and even like the apostles to rejoice that he is counted worthy to suffer shame in the name of his truth. If the Christian Church had been obliged to depend upon the Gamaliels, it would not have survived the generation. It is a great deed to open up and smooth the road for the onward march of truth; but it is a greater deed to march on the road as the teacher and apostle of truth.

Now we find the greatest of the three types of character in the council, — the apostles. Thank God, there have been and are such men; and they are the noblest men of all time. Their large

and faithful characters throw open the windows of life so that the light of truth can enter ; they give every seeker for the truth his opportunity to speak. But they also, like the apostle, have some truth to speak and live for. Their action is not going to blind their eyes to the truth which other men have to give, and their wide vision and calm faith are not going to weaken the intensity of purpose and sense of responsibility to turn all their powers to the upholding of truth.

Oh ! how I wish that you, who in this place and scholastic atmosphere have opportunity to gain a wide vision, to have calm confidence in God's truth, and amidst clashing opinions to trust that God will in time reveal His truth, and who can afford to be tolerant of others' convictions, would also draw into your characters a burning enthusiasm to work with God in the application of His truth ; with the Spirit of God go to His children and speak to them of Him ; go to those who have forgotten Him, and rouse them by your word and life to a fresh conviction of His comforting presence ; go as does the missionary to those who know not His name, and rejoice to work, live,

and suffer for the truth's sake, aye, for Christ's sake. For in Him you have the consummation of the Gamaliels and the apostles, the philosophers and the workers.

You cannot say that the two spirits, that of the philosopher and the worker, are inconsistent and impossible in the same man while the life of Jesus stands before you.

Was there ever a man so self-poised in his faith in the final victory of truth, so patient in waiting for her? "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." No violence, suppression, or appeal to prejudice was ever His. He was tolerant. "Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." "Thy kingdom come" was his prayer; but when, how, and where was in God's hands, and He was content to wait. So great was His confidence in His Father's truth, that He who saved others refused to save Himself. Greater, far greater, than Gamaliel, in His confidence in the truth; greater, far greater than Peter, in His life's activity and sacrifice for the truth; embosomed with the Father, He gave

Himself in every hour of the day, in every detail, in meeting the meanest and lowest, with the perfect abandonment of self, to the uplifting of His brethren.

This, then, is the sum of the whole matter: be patient, trust God and His truth; be full of action, work for God and His truth.

IX

THE UNIVERSITY MAN IN ACTIVE LIFE[1]

THERE are certain crises in life when the prime object is not to gain new strength or knowledge, not to enter into new experiences, but simply to stand still and gather to one's self the experiences of the past and the anticipations of the future, in order that the future may be more effectively met. There is, you know, the supreme moment of the athlete, when just before the race he calls to his aid all his experience, strength, and training, casts his eye on the goal, and stands ready for the word. It is the hour in which the soldier, hearing the guns at the front, quickly touches every part of his equipment to be sure that all is in place, recollects himself, his home, his orders, his duty, and is then eager for the charge.

Of like character, my friends of the

[1] Baccalaureate Sermon, Appleton Chapel, Harvard University, June 15, 1891.

class of Ninety-one, is this moment in which we stand. You do not ask me to give you new thoughts. At all events, I am not able to give them. What we want, as I understand, is simply to gather ourselves together, to rally to ourselves the experience and principles of the past with reference to the future; and so to be more vigorous, more intelligent and more truly ambitious in our new life.

As I mention this new life, the life outside the college walls, in business, profession, and social activities, one question rises for answer, — is it so new as some of us think? Is there, in principle at least, that sharp break between the university life and the business life, for instance, that many men emphasize? Is there in the man who happens to be a senior to-day and a clerk, or a law-student, or a young politician, next October, anything inherently different in principle? If so, something is wrong, either in the university or the social fabric. Of course, in his practical and to a certain degree in his intellectual and moral relations, a man may change. He may become a harder worker, he will be more

mature in judgment and more conservative in life, but — and this is the point I want to emphasize this afternoon — the principles which inhere in the true university life are the same principles that inhere in the true social life. Rightly considered, the ideal college man is the ideal citizen. Being deeply convinced of this, I, as I have already said, have nothing new to give you. My one object is to try, as it were, to gather together a few of your university principles, and see what preparation and experience they have given you to meet the demands of this generation. It is with this motive that I have chosen this text for our suggestion.

"And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of Judah. . . . And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord."[1]

When the people of Israel were about to enter into a new era of their history, the leader, Elijah, as he rebuilt their altar, built it not of new material and on a new site; but, with the instinct of a true statesman who knows the worth of historic continuity and ances-

[1] 1 Kings xviii. 31–32.

tral associations, he gathered together the twelve old stones, endeared by many memories, rebuilt the old altar along the old lines, and thus announced to the people that their new life was to be the continuance of what was best in the old.

As one looks out upon life to-day, with its intense activity and magnificent achievements, he cannot but be impressed with one characteristic arising from the very intensity and activity of interest, — a tendency on the part of each man to confine himself and his sympathies to the profession, business, or calling which he has chosen.

Division of labor has developed with wonderful rapidity, and with the demands of trade and the increase of inventions it is sure to develop into more thorough and exact proportions. As a mechanical and financial economy (and this has been the first consideration), its results have been marvellous. But the question for the rising generation is as to its effect on the individual character and the people as a whole.

I speak not only of labor divisions in

the lower mechanical lines, in factory towns where it is most easily seen, but in the higher callings. The realm of study is so large and the work demanded so thorough that a man in order to be successful is pressed to turn his life and interest in one narrow line: the classical scholar may spend his life on a small section of philology, the entomologist on one insect, the lawyer on one principle of law, the theologian on one detail of doctrine.

Hence the statement is made that in order to secure success in the next generation a man must narrow himself to one line of interest, and be content to be a narrow man. Granted this, and you have submitted to the demoralization of the individual. For you have laid upon the men of the highest ambition the necessity of being narrow men. You have demanded that all scientists shall follow the example of their master of this century, Darwin — so great and at the same time so limited — and lose interest in poetry and religion. You have compelled the politician to be merely a politician, the meanest of men when lost to nobler sympathies and the

higher welfare of society. You have driven the business man to be only a money-maker, with no interest in the wider benefits of commerce; and you have doomed the lawyer to a narrow life of practice, without sympathy with the deeper principles of law whose "seat is the bosom of God."

And this is just what for lack of nobler ideals many men are being driven to, or are drifting to. With this spirit existing in individuals, we shall have society formed of unsympathetic groups and atoms, incapable of common action, perpetually misunderstanding each other, lost in petty squabbles, science against religion, trade against statesmanship, politicians against the fundamentals of morality as expressed in the golden rule, scholars against manufacturers, class against class. Granted this apology for a narrow life, for a specialist who is only a specialist and nothing more, and you have lost one of the noblest objects and ideals of university life. No such opinion can obtain in a true university, and no such conviction is worthy of a true university man. For if a university stands for anything, it stands for the

development of the full man of large character and wide sympathies, inspired with an intense interest in his own peculiar line of work.

This, I suppose, is what brought you to Cambridge. You might have gained the same fitting for your profession in a technical school, a commercial college, or under private tutors. You might have gained that and more in a college which was dominated by the influence of one teacher or a small group of strong men. But you have come here to gain the knowledge and at the same time to breathe the atmosphere and absorb the culture which the wide interests of a university create. Your science will be no less that of an expert because studied in a classic atmosphere, and your culture will thereby be larger; your principles in literature and art will be no less true because you have studied them in the company of chemists and geologists; and your religious life will be no less deep because cultivated in a place where other interests group themselves and may be drawn into her service. It is suggestive that at Harvard the degree in theology, medicine, or law comes not

from the professional school, but from the university, as though the mother would give her children no token without the accompaniment of her full, large, and rich character.

I have dwelt on this, perhaps too much, because I wish to press home upon you the spirit in which the true university man takes up his life work, intensely interested in his own pursuit and widely sympathetic with all that concerns man. It sounds very simple, but some of you will find its practice very difficult. The very ambition and enthusiasm in your calling which goes with you from this place will tend to draw you into a concentrated and narrow life. Many of the older men who stand as your professional examples will have gained their positions at the loss of a large character and sympathies. You will find yourself instinctively apologizing for narrowing your interests, neglecting your public duties, shirking the great questions of the day, and forgetting even the higher objects of your profession. Such apologies may find some justification in the so-called self-made man, in the uncultured servant of present success; but

they have no place in the life of a university man.

If you are to be a teacher, be more than a man who merely teaches school. If you are to be a business man, be more than a man with a trade; consider your business in its wider relations, — to other trades, to economics, to society, to character. If you must be a man of leisure, be more than a club man and a loafer; you have untold possibilities to pass your leisure in absorbing work for your city, your nation, your neighbor, in art, politics, and charity. To repeat the cry of a writer of the seventeenth century, "We want public souls, we want them!" — and they should be the first fruits of a university.

Again, a generation ago the final address to the graduates of school and college often closed with the exhortation that they should "make a name" and "be heard from." We are now reaping the whirlwind of such sentiments in the popular adulation of "publicity." This is the hour when we should ask ourselves seriously as to our ideals. What is our definition of personal suc-

cess? Is it dependent on public recognition? There is no question that in the popular mind success is closely related to public approval or renown. Men instinctively look to their fellow men to judge their work, and where their own interest is concerned, they esteem the quantity rather than the quality of approval. Certainly the approval of worthy men is not to be despised.

But does not the ideal of success in the university spirit run deeper than that? What is all this that we hear of the seeking of truth for truth's sake, of the entering into the higher life for its own sake, in man's glory in living for man, if not that we are truth-seekers and pilgrims of the higher life because these are the true missions of man? And now take this principle into "the madding crowd." Boldly expressed, it has the sound of a visionary or a prig; but expressed in the quiet influence of an active, earnest life, what will result? Instead of a man who is restlessly running here and there to catch the last popular note, who is working at the bar or in the town hall with one eye on the popular effect, who is, I will not say

poisoning, but simply tincturing his calling with those subtle elements of sham and petty immoralities that catch the people's eye and bring in the dollars; instead of one who is ever anxious lest the fame of his fortune or his talents do not get abroad before the grave closes on him, you have one who in calm confidence or buoyant enthusiasm does his duty in life, puts his hand to the business that life lays on him, reaches out his hand and grasps duties that without his volunteer service life would not have laid upon him; you have the student who, in his patient search for some secret truth, lets the world hurry by and leave him stranded in his dusty alcove, for his wisdom will be justified by wisdom in time; you have the minister who, with all esteem for the truth of the past, does his quiet work and is unmoved by the cries of heresy-hunters about his heels; you have the man of public spirit who, regarding at its highest worth the voice of the people, regards first the voice of truth and his own conscience.

In other words, my friends, only a very small fraction of humanity is ever heard from, and of that fraction it were

well if a good part had gone down in silence. The great mass of men, and as a rule, the best of them, simply do their work, find their little scrap of truth, live their faithful life, give a little cheer to their comrades, and then surrender the whole into God's hands and to the service of those who come after. It sounds little, but it is noble, very noble, to become a living stone in that living temple of humanity; to help to build up man into the glorious ideal which God has placed before him. He serves posterity best who serves his own generation best. And the ambition of the true university man is patient, faithful, present, silent service.

There is another element in the active life of to-day which needs sorely the spirit of a true university man.

This is an age of material success and interest in physical things. I need not dwell on that, for you know it. It is also an age in which democracy has risen, public opinion has become dominant, and the transmission of public opinion has been made easy. These and other elements have emphasized the

power of circumstance, of heredity and birth, and of humanity massed, with the result that from the depths of the masses there has arisen and is still rising a vague and popular fatalism, a sense that man is not so free as he thought himself, a surrender to circumstance, a stolid yielding to fate, or an angry outburst against present conditions, and, worst of all, a subtle skepticism as to the worth of character and the power of spiritual forces. There is that unthinking sentiment that things are made so and they have got to go on as they are. Social evils have entered our communities, and you cannot drive them out; demoralization has run riot in city politics, and what are you going to do about it? Wealth is going to bring luxury, and luxury will bring, as it always has brought, immorality; the stream will then be down, and who can stop it? How familiar all this talk is. And how willingly we are tempted to acquiesce in it. But what has this to do with the relations of university to active life?

The university is a home of spiritual forces; it deals with life and with the history of life; its literature, its lectures,

its enthusiasms are in spiritual lines. Of all places in the world next to the church, the university is the last place to weaken faith in the worth of character. The history of civilization is the history of the victorious march of spiritual forces, and the history of Christianity takes its spring from Him who was of all men spiritual and perfect in character. Therefore the man who passes through the college gate to the problems of life goes with a perfect confidence in this, that man has the future in his grasp, that there are no social circumstances or political situations or moral conditions which if rightly met will not yield to the spiritual energy of man. He has no patience with the whine that because an abuse has been, therefore it must be.

Can there be a better object lesson of the power of the spiritual forces of man than the past century has produced? We call it the age of materialism, invention, and physical interest. And yet when the class of 1791 assembled to hear their baccalaureate sermon, think of the social condition of Europe and the then known world: the cry of human rights heard only in the savage voice of

the Paris mob; the people of Europe, from Russia to "Merry England," practically unrecognized; this country still staggering under the burdens of the Revolution; the great continents of the East, Japan, China, India, Australia and Africa, in heathenism and to a large degree barbarism; slavery upheld everywhere as an institution of Christian civilization; government for the few and by the few; almost nothing of that spirit of the common civic and social interests of all classes which has risen so rapidly in the last twenty-five years. In this century the surface of the world even has been changed in its physical features, and the character and thoughts of the people who inhabit it are ennobled. What has wrought this change?

Nature, climate, physical conditions, circumstances, inheritance? They have had their part. But what has moved them and harnessed them to service? There is only one answer — man, with his unique spiritual force, his will, his intellect, his creative and inventive mind; men touched with the fire of divine enthusiasm for humanity; men working selfishly for their own gain, used by God

to enrich the world; men working nobly for others' good, the servants of God to uplift their brethren.

There have been leaders; their names are household words. But there have been the rank and file of kindred spirits who did their work silently and died as silently as they lived. There are the lives of those whose names are emblazoned in yonder Memorial Hall; and there are the lives of those whose bodies lie in nameless graves on Arlington Heights and under the sod at Gettysburg.

By faith in God, in righteousness, in liberty, in humanity, these men lived. These all died in faith.

While these facts stand and these memories last, who of you is going to yield to the cowardly word that things must be as they are, and that movements and tendencies are greater than men and cannot be guided and created? The list of what has been done by men suggests what man has yet to do, and to do in this present generation.

You know what it is? The tremendous social questions, the problems of politics and economics, of national in-

tegrity and charity, of the family, of the rights of property, of the individual, of purity in society, of commercial honor. They spring to mind faster than we can name them. These things are not going to drift. They are going to move, and some of them very rapidly; and some men are going to be behind the movement, — the ignorant, the charlatan, the selfish and the immoral, if not the intelligent, the honest, the unselfish and the pure.

The question that I want to ask you and that I believe you are asking yourselves is, what part are you going to take in the work? Is the university spirit, which believes above all things in the worth of character, going with you into the activities of life? You will find fellow-workers of intelligence and strength who never entered a college gate. But you have something of your own and of your college life and opportunities to bring. Carry it with you, and believe in all humility that when a man is wanted, there your work as a man can be done.

Some of you may think that in all this I have hardly touched the level of

a sermon, for religion as such has hardly been mentioned. On the contrary, my words have failed of their purpose if they have not been interpreted as a part of religion. I know of no better way of serving God than that of taking life in its larger, wider relations, doing your work faithfully, regardless of popular applause, and confident in the worth of character. He who so lives must live in the spirit of Christ. He must turn to Him for his ideal, His support, and His inspiration. Christ has been the foundation of all that has been good in the movements of the past century. Christ must be at the foundation of every action for good in your generation.

This, then, is my last word to you, men of the class of '91 : in your hopes and disappointments, in your successes and defeats, turn to Him for the richest embodiment of manhood, and in His life rest in confidence.

X

JESUS IN HIS OWN CITY[1]

"AND he could there do no mighty works, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief."[2]

For the second time since He had entered on his public ministry, our Lord was in the town where He had passed the most of his life. You remember that at the first visit the jealousy and wrath of his former playmates and neighbors drove Him from Nazareth, and came near casting Him headlong down the cliff whereon the city was built. Since that day, some months had passed. His miracles, teachings, and character had made His name a household word; crowds were following Him, and He had given every assurance that faith in Him strengthens and revivifies the life as well as the limbs of men.

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, February 19, 1888.

[2] Mark vi. 5, 6.

When, therefore, the Saviour, on one of his missionary journeys, again passed through Nazareth, He had a right to expect that His fellow-townsmen, regretting their former conduct, would give Him a sympathetic reception. And a first glance through the village street seemed to assure Him of it. Out from the houses were being brought the sick, the lame, and the blind. Up the hill from the surrounding country were to be seen groups of men and women helping the crippled and paralyzed to a nearer touch of the great healer. As He taught in the synagogue, the crowd pressed in. But as He came forth, with hands of healing uplifted, and with every intention of pouring out his life-giving powers upon those with whom He had played in childhood, or as a boy had watched while they crept through the town, He was mysteriously checked; a quick change crossed His face; sorrow took the place of hope. The lines of anguish, which were destined to become deeper as the months went by, were seen by the people. His hands fell helpless. With the exception of three or four sick people who were strengthened, there was no

sign of miraculous work. The cord of spiritual sympathy between Him and the others seemed suddenly to have snapped, and He was powerless to cure. "He could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk."

What was it that caused the fatal break? The Saviour certainly appeared to be ready and anxious to act. And the townspeople, — it could not be that any fault of theirs should throw away this opportunity. Never had Nazareth or any other city such a chance for gaining health of body and renewal of spiritual life. The only explanation we have is that given by St. Mark, "And He marvelled because of their unbelief." The trouble, then, was with them and not with Him. He who could still the waves in the tempest and raise the dead depended for the exercise of His power upon the faith, the sympathy, the belief of men.

Whether, with one commentator, you say that their unbelief made it physically impossible for Him to heal the others; or, with another commentator, you think that His miraculous power was still there, but that He could not consistently use it while the people remained in unbelief,

the result is the same. The fact remains that He could not and did not do mighty works, because of their unbelief. Matthew says He did not, Mark says He could not. The unbelief of a few ordinary men and women in Nazareth checked the mighty works of Christ.

First, as to that word, unbelief. Of course it had not the formal definition which often clings to it now. Their difficulty was not a disbelief in some formal creed about Christ, nor in any definite religious dogmas. It was not so much an intellectual condition as a moral and spiritual want. They had no confidence in Him as anything more than a mere miracle worker; they hardly had that. They had no sympathy with the aims and principles of His life. They cared not for His work of bringing love and goodness and justice into Nazareth. Their hearts were wholly out of tune with His. They were Nazarenes, and He once lived, the son of a carpenter, in Nazareth; and that was the only point of contact between them. When Jesus would carry them to higher truths and a purer life, that point of contact was broken. They had no faith in Him as the perfect man,

the Messiah, or the Revelation of their God. And the want of that, as we have seen, checked the mighty works.

Here, then, we have an instance of that mysterious but undeniable fact that God, in giving man his power to act freely and to have a will of his own, and thus to choose for the right and help on the work of God, also gave him the power to choose for the wrong and check and block and destroy the work of God. He gave the highest possible blessing, and the deepest possible degradation.

In this incident, therefore, we have our thought for this morning, the power in men to check and to help the great works of God.

In thinking and talking over our efforts to do what is right, and to seek and find the truth, we very often take it for granted that the struggle is all on our side. I think that we sometimes give ourselves and others the impression that every scrap of truth and light has got to be fought for. Some persons talk as if God were somehow rather parsimonious and niggardly in His bounty, as if, in order to snatch fire from heaven, one must

run great risks, and in order to open the gates to eternal light, ever so small a crack, one must give a strong and a long pull. Of course there is a phase of truth here ; man must struggle for the truth ; but not because God holds it like a miser. The Christian, and not the pagan idea is that God is Light, and like the great Light, He is shining and pressing into every nook and cranny of the world, into every house where the windows are thrown open to His warmth and radiance, into every eye that is not closed against His rays. "I am the Light of the world." "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." The difficulty is not with Him, but with men, who do not realize the fact of the Light, nor their need of it ; who will not throw open the windows of their hearts nor make an effort to open their closed eyes. "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." Men do not believe in Him, and therefore abide in darkness. "He that doeth evil hateth the light."

I know this is all familiar, but I also believe that its truth is not enough felt.

The father of the Prodigal has not

shut the door which the returning son must burst before he can get in; but the father waits with open arms at the open door. And the only thing that prevents the Prodigal's return is the struggle with his own pride and heartlessness. The one thing, therefore, that prevents the whole world to-day from being suffused and filled with the light and life of Christ, with purity, love, and justice, is that the world does not want to be filled with light and life. Man has that enormous power to refuse light, and he uses it. "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life."

I want, however, to bring the truth into closer relations with our own life and thought here and to-day.

We all have our social ideal, our expectations of a purified society, a Plato's Republic or a Christian millennium; a day when the wolf shall lie down with the lamb; when all men will be just and true and merciful. If God is the Almighty, why cannot He bring it about? We have just seen, — because men, because we, much as we dream and idealize about it, do not want it brought about.

The key is in our own hands. Nazareth cannot be uplifted because the Nazarenes have no sympathy with Him who would uplift. His arms drop powerless.

That there has been a steady movement since Christ's day towards a stronger sympathy with the principles of His life, no honest student, believer or unbeliever, can doubt. Men have caught scraps and rays of light. The darkness is not so deep now as in Herod's day, or in the palmy days of Greece and Rome. The cry for justice, purity, and truth meets with a heartier response from the whole people in this century than ever before. And yet that there is an almost universal skepticism of the possibility of perfect justice, purity, and truth, I think no one can deny. Here and there, on mountain peaks of character, are seers and believers. But the mass of men are not expectant of mighty spiritual works. They do not believe that Christ or Christian truth can lift men up to high levels of character. Men are not all pessimists, far from that ; but even the best of them hesitate when they begin to talk of the higher and nobler realms of life as being possible in society to-day. Jesus is in

our Nazareth ; and we agree that He can heal a few sick folk. His power can leaven society to a certain degree ; it can touch the respectable and give comfort to sick and weary souls ; it can develop the child life and build a few hospitals and orphans' homes. But that it can go down into the lowest dregs of society and take the drunkards and the harlots and reform and purify them ; that it can make business in every way sensitive to the least suspicion of dishonesty ; that it can eliminate scandal from society and filth from the papers, and make our men and women and children of every class true and pure and Christlike ! Never. And content with that, we settle down to congratulate ourselves that at all events a few sick folk have got the benefit of His work.

The Nazareth of modern society will not be healed, because, much as we talk about reform and all that, modern society does not believe it can be healed.

Let me illustrate the thought by a conversation which I heard some two months ago.

A gentleman of great intelligence and high standing in the city in which he

lives, in conversing about the use and abuse of wine, happened incidentally to say that the career of so-called reformed drunkards and the history of efforts to reclaim them showed conclusively that if a man once became a drunkard, there was no hope for him, and the sooner he drank himself to death the better for him and his friends.

In a few moments the conversation turned upon prominent men in the New York stock-market, and a New York gentleman, naming one of the most successful in speculation, said, "When I first knew him as a young man he was a drunkard in the gutter, and not worth a cent." Here, then, on the moment, was an instance from life that showed that, with a motive strong enough and favorable circumstances, the drunkard can be and is reformed. And yet you can hear the opinion of the first man expressed every day in society. The truth is that drunkards are reformed, only a fraction of them — a few sick folk — but it is this skepticism in the community which prevents a larger reformation. How can you expect a man who through drink has weakened his

moral fibre and will power, and who has lost his self-respect, to fight against such a popular prejudice, such a depression of the atmosphere of opinion, and at the same time fight his passion for drink? But let the poor drunkard who to-morrow morning will be released from the county jail be met with the popular conviction that there is hope for him, let that conviction find its expression in the friendly counsel and aid of those of his own social class, let him be surrounded by favorable circumstances, and be inspired with the strongest motives of hope, ambition, self-respect, aye, of a Christian and manly life, and popular belief will cast aside the obstacle which popular unbelief places in his way. The hands of Jesus will then do mighty works.

I only mention this instance because it is an illustration that is easily grasped, and suggests one of the most difficult of works.

Social life is so intricate, and the sins and weakness and low ideas and prejudices of men are so interwoven with each other, that one cannot suggest a possible reform or purification in one line without coming upon many others.

Each man may have his hobby of where the work of healing should begin (and it is well that every man should have such a hobby); one may press for political reform, and another for honesty in business, and another for the eradication of social vices, and another for the elevation of the home; but the one thing that all must have is faith that the power of Christ can effect the work. Here, my friends, is the crucial point. You believe that if men would only turn decidedly to the effort of making the power of Christ felt, an immense work would be done. You recall one man here and there in history who has led a movement against some accepted but well recognized social sin, a Telemachus, a Savonarola, a Wilberforce. You can name men to-day who are moulding popular opinion and leading movements in favor of truth or purity in some line of society, or some missionary who in breaking through the darkness of the Dark Continent has given up his life for the savages, and you give them your applause, your sympathy, and possibly a little of your spare cash. But, my friends, they want, and their cause wants, some-

thing more than that. Their ideal and ours is that there shall be perfect righteousness. That the poor will be helped and elevated? Yes, but that the poor will be pure and Christlike in character, and that the rich will be the same, and that all the mass of men between them will be sensitive to the slightest taint of impurity, or untruthfulness, or injustice; that each and all will be full of the spirit of sacrifice in little as well as great things. The call, then, of to-day is for a study at home, a search into our own hearts and lives.

In short, "Are your minds set upon righteousness," O ye congregation? Are we living now just as if that ideal life for which we long were here? Is every word and deed spoken and done as if in the sight of God? Is every sale made and every bargain closed with the sense that there is not the suspicion of deceit or dishonor in it? Is the selection of your reading according to the truest line of purity and ennobling thought? Are your associations such as suggest what is most manly and refined? Is there no yielding to the popular pressure that you cannot expect too much of a man in the

way of purity and abstinence from doubtful or evil habits? You are honest, but are you generous in money, in deeds? but, more than that, in your estimate of others' motives and conduct? You are of a kindly disposition, but is there a spirit of real self-sacrifice, of doing readily what you hate to do, but what you ought to do for others' comfort?

Are your minds set upon righteousness?

It is a tremendous demand, but an ennobling one, that of throwing not only our applause and sympathy, but ourselves, every wish, taste, and ambition, into the clearing the way for the coming of the Sun of Righteousness, and of living every day in that light.

No man can do it alone, not even with the support of those about him, unless he has the inspiration from the thought of those words, "we then as workers with Him." The poor, sick peasant on the street in Nazareth, who believed in spite of the popular unbelief, realized that he was not his own healer, but that Christ, who was the healer then and there, had the power to lift him into higher realms of character and faith.

The peasant did not work alone, and Jesus did not work alone. They were fellow workers, and with common sympathy their work was unlimited in its possibilities. Given God and one man of faith, and you have a legion of the redeemed in sight.

There is another phase of our thought which I have time to do little more than suggest.

"This is all true," I hear you say; "I have not had that faith in the possible supremacy of all that is right and true which I ought to have had. I will make a stronger effort in the future to tone up my faith in Christ, to make my life conform more nearly to my ideal of social rectitude. But this surely is not all that the Christian religion asks? Nothing has been said by you of holiness and the saintly life. Fortunately, however, for true and righteous as I hope to be, I have nothing of the saint in my make-up; real holiness must be left to others; there is no power that can make a spiritually-minded man out of me."

No power? no possibility of saintliness? It cannot be that Jesus, who calls

all men to Him, and exhorts all to be perfect as His Father in Heaven is perfect, gives that invitation with the silent reserve that for the majority of men the words have no possible application.

Here again is the same unbelief of the Nazarenes. You say that Jesus can bring an average man to average morality; He may lift you to a higher degree of character than some of your neighbors, but such a mighty work as that of creating a saintly character out of you is out of the question. Is the trouble with Him? Or is it not rather in yourself, that you do not really want, as your highest wish, that saintly form of character?

First, adjust your idea of the saint; cut out from your definition all that is artificially pious, all that is weak sentiment and lean and hungry in look, and realize and insist on the realization that the true saint is simply the man developed in all his features to the highest perfection; with all his powers, spiritual, moral, intellectual, and even physical, brought into the fullest play — that he is above all else and in everything, a man: and that the saintly woman is the one in whom are developed in their rarest form

all the graces and beauties of the womanly character. Think of these as in truth the ideal saints. And can you picture any nobler end for yourself and your life's ambition than to be a saint?

Having that hope firmly in your grasp, now throw open all the windows of your soul to the influence of Jesus. By prayer, thought and action, let His divine power move in and through your life; and be sure that a mighty work is within His power and your possibility. Not that of lifting you into ordinary spiritual vitality, but of transforming you through and through with His Spirit. Believe it of yourself, believe in its possibility for others; let this congregation believe it and live as if they believed it; and the spiritual lift and common sympathy in a noble hope would carry us higher and higher in the Christlike life, and move the ambitions of the whole community. Take no ideal but the highest. Be content with no possibility less than the noblest sainthood. And men will cease to question the power of Christianity, and will join us in following Him who is the inspirer and comforter of all saints, the Lord Jesus Christ.

XI

HEAVENLY-MINDEDNESS [1]

"For our conversation" (or, as the Revised Version more correctly puts it, "for our citizenship") "is in heaven." [2]

One of the calls of Ascension Day is to heavenly-mindedness, and to that call we respond this morning.

As I speak these words, I can feel some of you sink back in your seats with the listless air, "Now the preacher is going to soar away into some sentimental, unpractical sphere of thought, apart from our daily life and interests."

And I cannot but confess that there is some reason for the listless air. For, as we speak of a heavenly-minded man, it does suggest something a little over-sentimental and unreal, or at least unsympathetic with our common interests.

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, Ascension Day, 1892.

[2] Philippians iii. 20.

If the popular theology is that heaven and God and the ascended Christ are up there, — away up, — and that the world, and men, and human interests are down here; then, of course, the man who is heavenly-minded has his thoughts and interests up there, and not down here. He is above the common interests of life, and therefore very uninteresting to those every-day people who have the common interests of life at heart. And he floats sublimely through life, eating the food and living on the earnings of the common people, who partly admire him and partly simply endure him.

No matter what the age or the theology, this form of heavenly-mindedness will be found, — sometimes stern and hard, sometimes placid and benevolent, sometimes simply passive; but always lifted above the common herd of men. After all, there is something attractive to us who are sin-laden and overwhelmed with earthly interests, in the thought that there are a few choice souls in the world who are entirely oblivious to what absorbs and enslaves us.

And yet, is this heavenly-mindedness? Is this what we pray for in the Col-

lect to-day, when we ask that as Christ "ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend?" Is it a supplication for a few choice spirits, a spiritual aristocracy? Or is it not rather a universal prayer, that we, common men and women, who have got to earn our living, take care of our homes, look after our business, and take our part in all the activities of life, may in heart and mind thither ascend?

Do not be deceived by the glamour of the heavenly uplook of the mystic. He may, too, be heavenly-minded, but if there is any reality to the prayer, and to the ascension truth, it is for all men. If I could say no other word or suggest no other thought than this, I would urge one thing, that to be heavenly-minded lies within the possibility of every man, and that only by becoming such can one be a full man.

It may be, then, that we shall have to first reconstruct our theology a little, or at least change the emphasis of the different terms somewhat.

God is up there, of course; but surely God is down here as well, "for in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

Jesus is up there; but He, too, is certainly here with us. "Lo, I am with you alway."

Heaven is up there. May it not be also that heaven is down here? In other words, should the emphasis be so strong upon the point of locality as upon the point of condition? not where God is, but what He is; not where you are now, or hereafter, but what you are.

And if this is so, may it not be that a heavenly-minded man is one who, living here in this town, is one who in character and life is in sympathy with the essential character and life of heaven?

The American citizen hails from a certain part of the world, from America; but the difference between him and a French citizen is not only that of locality but that of character; and wherever the American may be, he has the characteristics of the American citizen.

The heavenly citizenship far more is a citizenship of a certain character. What that character is can only be learned by a study of what the essentials of heaven are.

This, then, is what I should like to call your thoughts to this morning; to two

or three of the essentials of heaven, and therefore of heavenly-mindedness.

What is the one feature that stands out in all our minds and in the yearnings of the human heart, as well as in the Christian revelation, as the essential element of heaven? Not streets of gold, or harps, or thrones, or even the innumerable company; but the presence of God Himself. Without Him, heaven would be no heaven. With Him, heaven is, not first a locality, but wherever one is in His presence, there is the heavenly life. Not heaven in its fulness; but the first elements of the heavenly life. In entering, then, into His presence here and now, amidst our daily common interests, we have entered into a spiritual kingdom, where, so far as we live in sympathy with it, there is perfect spiritual harmony, where there is no law of compulsion; but the perfect service is the perfect freedom; where the will of the one great loving Spirit is evidently so reasonable, so just, and so true, that any one who is in sympathy with the heavenly life acts in harmony with it as if it were his own will.

Does this seem mystical? as if we were, in spite of ourselves, falling into the partial definition that we have discarded?

Then let us remember the other side. God in the Incarnation has made Himself one with man. All created things have their relation to Him. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now." The thought is not, then, the Spirit of God opposed to or contrasted with the things of creation; but the Spirit of God as moving within, as embodied in the bodies of men, as suffusing and glorifying the whole of nature and of all the things that are associated with our daily life.

If, then, a man has within him the Spirit of God, that very fact will send him with the utmost intensity into the interests of men. He will move among them, and live among them, for they are his interests. He is in its true sense a man of affairs, a man of the world, if you will not misconstrue the phrase, and yet he is also a man of God. Now, I think we are in a position to test the heavenly-minded man by a contrast.

Worldly-mindedness, we are all agreed,

is a very imminent danger to the young lives of to-day. Ay, I am not sure that it is not a greater danger to those of middle age. The young are sometimes saved by their early ideals, their romantic aspirations and their first noble enthusiasms. But for the dull, respectable, sordid, worldly business man who thinks business and talks business, and is nothing but business and money-getting for seven days in the week, or for the worldly woman who thinks and talks of clothes and shopping, one wonders if there is any salvation. They certainly do not seem to care for it even if it hangs within their grasp.

The worldly-minded man or woman is the one in whom the things of this world, the houses and horses, the dresses and food, the business and sports are the only things to be considered. Poverty presses a man into this spirit as well as wealth. The materialism which this age has to fear is not in the studies of the philosophers so much as it is in the avenues and the alleys of our cities, where the final test of value is what it cost or what it will bring in money or in social position.

Now, among these great masses of people of the world are of course all shades of worldliness, but the essential feature is that the supreme interests are in things and people, and especially in themselves.

But on the other hand, one has misjudged modern life if he has found only these. In the midst of the world, intensely interested in the things of the world, in business, in people, in social life, there are some men and women who impress us as if we had moved into another atmosphere. We feel that behind their present interests are deeper interests which guide their present action; there is a self-restraint to their world-spirit, an evident appeal in certain crises to another and a higher standard; there is an humble estimate of self which attracts us beside the vulgar esteem of the worldly man. And in time we learn that God, not first as a dogma or as a symbol of fashionable religion, but God, the Spirit of God, dwells in the heart and rules in the life. Reverence, humility, awe, devotion, worship, which are as essential to true and full manhood as even honesty in business or truthfulness in word, have their part in such a man's

make-up. He is refined in his tone, sensitive, and yet always open and manly; and we are attracted. But wherein lies the contrast between him and the worldly or the vulgar? Is it not simply in this, that in the depth of his life, he is a heavenly-minded man; he has the essential feature of heaven, the presence of God in his life?

Is there anything artificial or unreal in this? I appeal to you who instinctively shrink from heavenly-mindedness as if it were unpractical or over-strained. As compared with the merely worldly man, is he not the nobler, the more attractive man of the two? Is he not the one to whose judgment you will finally appeal?

Some of us, however, may not be wholly satisfied with this. Let us go a step further and touch the second heavenly characteristic. "The presence of God in the man's life," — what does that mean? We have met men and women who claimed that God was with them, and who were as vulgar and worldly as any one. We have seen those who have been most reverent, most religious, be-

come dishonest and impure under the stress of temptation which the worldly man has withstood.

Have we, then, an adequate conception of God? Surely He is more than a spiritual claim, and more than a spiritual feeling. He is a spiritual personality, a character, aye, rather the character above all others. Righteousness, purity, truth, sacrifice, find their perfect embodiment in Him. Therefore, the presence of God means the presence of all that goes to make up the highest in character.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." This is the Ascension Day Psalm.

It is very strange that with the Scriptures in our houses, and even in our hands, any man could have defined the presence of God in the heart as possible without the presence of the righteousness that is God.

Wherever, then, you find righteousness, purity, truth, sacrifice, any of the elements which really belong in heaven, there you may be sure, even though the

man protests that he is not religious, you have a touch of the heavenly character.

And wherever you find one who, rejoicing in the presence of God, gives to the community the illustration of these characteristics, you have one who is indeed of heaven; that is even now his citizenship. Heavenly-mindedness is, therefore, at the foundations of all that is best and purest in the common routine of life. It is that which prevents worldly interests from becoming merely worldly, but makes them the clothing and the instruments of the heavenly. Let us be explicit here.

Heavenly-mindedness is not the peculiar property of those sweet and lovely characters that seem too good to live long here; too fragile for the rough and tumble of this life. These may be heavenly-minded.

But there are strong, manly, rough, honest, practical souls in the turmoil of life, whose hands are hardened with toil, whose brows are knit with the pressure of work, who amidst all their cares and pleasures are bringing into life the presence of God; because with

Him in their lives, they are bringing in what the world wants above all things, righteousness.

And now, my friends, we turn to ourselves. As Christians, our ambition is to be in the true sense heavenly-minded. Yet there is no temptation more subtle and more common than that which substitutes feelings for facts, which mistakes the presence of vague, pious emotions for the presence of God. But let God's presence once sweep through the men and women of the Church in all its fulness, the presence of perfect righteousness, purity, truth, and sacrifice, and what a stirring of the dead bones of lingering piety would it create. Do not understand me as saying that the people have none of God's presence. But do understand me, that in this generation and in the next generation, when pagan culture is becoming noble in some of its characteristics, when self-sacrifice is recognized as the duty of even unbelievers, Christian people, if they are to represent Christ and His Church, must bring to the world lives that are suffused, that are fired with God's presence.

I do not mean simply enthusiasm, go, activity in Church and missionary work, but all these backed by the deepest elements of the true heavenly character. Men, righteous men, honest, paying their debts promptly, being right with all men; pure men, not simply harmlessly innocent, but strongly and positively pure in tone, in speech, in thought; true men, who, under no technical cover, hold back or add to the truth, but who are as transparent as the light; men and women of self-sacrifice. I know of no worldliness so subtle as that which may undermine the early enthusiasms of a man as he takes on the commercial and worldly spirit. Each step in the decline from the high ideals and noble ambitions of his youth, down to the comfortable easy life of the middle age, may be justified to his own satisfaction; and really, he may not have the slightest conception that he is self-deceived; yet the decline is there, God's presence departing: heaven more distant as the next life comes nearer.

But blessed is he who, throwing himself into all interests that interest men and women, and into those peculiar in-

terests that belong to his calling, keeps his heart and life ever open to the voice and the life of God.

In these days, when thousands on thousands are being wrecked in their faith through the pressure of pagan thought and misconceptions of Christianity, when huge masses of humanity are going to death every day because they are the slaves of their senses, when worldliness is rampant, I cannot understand how Christian men can press forward into a leading place the questions of ways and means, of institutions, and the little problems of ritual and theological fine points, instead of bringing the whole weight of their character and their office upon the pressing of the Spirit of God into the world, and with St. Paul "reason of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." Oh! the poor souls that are waiting for you and me to come and tell them of Christ, and lift them from doubt and misery, and comfort them. Give them not stones, but bread. Of course the questions of ways and means and of institutions are of importance, of great importance. Yet, as we look back over the vista of Christian

centuries, we find that the heavenly company, the saints recognized throughout Christendom as saints, were of all folds, of many opinions and varying shades of thought. There were certain features that marked them as citizens of heaven. They were, as we have tried to express it, heavenly-minded men, women, and children ; and I know of no higher work — aye, of no other work — than that of leading men into that company.

I have only time to suggest two practical thoughts which I had hoped to develop more fully.

In the first place, it seems to me that if one is really filled with the Spirit of God, and really has his eye singly on what God would prompt him to do, and, while in the midst of the world's activities, keeps himself in character heavenly-minded, he will become less self-conscious, less anxious of results, and he will have the courage simply and quietly to act and let the results take care of themselves.

Questions are coming up on all sides on which Christian men, laymen, and clergymen, will have to speak and act

wisely, but on which, also, they will have to speak and act decidedly and with courage. No one knows what effect the action of a man of God may have. If the man's motives be pure, his character of the qualities of heaven, no one can measure the effect of his word and action. He has had the courage of his convictions. The heavenly-minded man is, then, the man of moral courage.

And, finally, the heavenly-minded man is a man of hope. There are many losing causes which Christian men will join. There are phases of theology and church life in which we may become bound up in interest. They may fail, and we may be tempted to think that the true cause is lost. But the true cause is so simple, so deep, that of God entering into and gaining the life of men, that it cannot fail. The Christian is by the very fact of his calling a man of hope. His eye is forward. For the ascended Christ, who has led captivity captive, gives him the true line of life, and the Christian man — you and I, men of hope — look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth the one eternal heavenly quality, — righteousness.

XII

PRIVILEGE AND HELPFULNESS[1]

"THUS saith the Lord of hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." [2]

There is something very vigorous about the whole scene from which this text is taken.

To the vision of the prophet, Jerusalem, once destroyed and desolate, is now restored. The streets, which so short time ago were empty and grass-grown, are full of boys and girls playing; the vines on the terraces without the wall give their fruit and the ground her increase. With the return of strength, people, and wealth, comes also the in-

[1] St. John's Memorial Chapel, Cambridge, October 9, 1892.

[2] Zechariah viii. 23.

flow of strong and vigorous character. "Speak ye every man truth with his neighbor; execute the judgment of peace and truth," are the watchwords of the state.

But — and here is the unique feature of the scene — no sooner has the city realized herself again, her wealth, her character, and her ability, than she realizes also her opportunity. With privilege comes the sense of responsibility. The nations about her, still poor and desolate, are in her power, and may be conquered. But, better than that, they may be saved and enriched. She has, in her abundant wealth, a work to do for them; and they are looking to her to do it. She begins to realize the glory of helpfulness and of leadership through service of others. Every citizen has become a small focus of light and help to other peoples. "In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you."

This, then, is the thought from which I want to speak in a plain and simple

way this morning. With the increase of wealth and character comes the opportunity of helpfulness and the glory of leadership by service.

And as we have no time to spend in talking of other ages and of the prophets' days, I am going to come directly to ourselves and our day.

For those of us who have been brought up in the comforts of life, it is very difficult to realize that even in this country, and far more so in other lands, the great, the very great majority of people are living to-day on what they earned yesterday or last month. We forget that to the great mass of people a capital of one or a few thousand dollars is a life dream unrealized. They work from childhood to old age, and though some of them have brought up a family, they have never been able to open a bank account, or at the best have only gathered a few hundred dollars. I am not now speaking of the wretched poor, the tramps, and the paupers, but of the great body of wage-earners that form our people, elect our magistrates, and build up our wealth.

What is true of their financial is true also of their intellectual condition. They have a rudimentary education, but they have nothing to spare. Throughout the country districts you will find self-respecting, industrious, faithful people who, however much they wish to educate their children, have not enough education themselves to inspire them. And the whole type of living is so economical, so close, and of necessity so small, that there is no character even to spare. They are like the trees on some mountain side, by no fault of theirs, planted where it is impossible to do more than cling to the soil and hold their own. There are the common sympathies and deeds of kindness and mutual helpfulness which one finds among the poor. But they have no abundance of life to give out to others.

On the other hand, there is, throughout the country and in the cities, the more favored class; a class including not only the rich, but those who have been brought up in reasonable comfort, who have received more than the average education, and who have, by inheritance and nurture, a larger amount of

vital character than is necessary simply to hold their own.

Probably almost every person in this congregation is of that class. All of us have had opportunities better than the average. And as we enter or develop into manhood and womanhood, the question rises as to whether we are going to live simply to ourselves, or whether, like the revived Jerusalem, we shall, in the realization of our privilege, realize also our opportunity of helpfulness.

The truth is that the modern community is bound together by ties of common interest. The idea that any one individual has the right to do as he pleases, and spend his money as he pleases, regardless of the welfare of the community, is passed. "No man liveth to himself." The bonds of commerce, of political and social interest, are so close and strong that a movement at any point affects the whole fabric. The solidarity of society is being recognized more fully every year.

Every one, therefore, who, in health, education, wealth, or character, has been privileged, has laid upon him by that very fact the opportunity and the duty

of pouring out from that for the enrichment and help of others.

Of course this is commonplace. And yet when one comes to apply the principle personally, the questions and difficulties begin to rise.

Here is a man, born in comfort, blessed with a Christian home, and the best of school and collegiate education, who on reaching manhood turns thought, money, life, and character on to the things that go to make up a life of ease, of style, and of popular favor. There is nothing bad about the man. In principle he agrees with all that we have said. But he tells us that we have no idea of the pressure that there is upon him. The necessities of his social life and position really claim his whole time. As for his income, large as it is, it is hardly sufficient for his own expenses; and as for character, it is hard enough to hold his own under the social temptations. No! there is nothing left to give out to others. And so, in spite of himself, the man really believes that it is out of his power to do much of anything beyond the keeping up of his establishment and social engagements.

We all know men who, in spite of their better selves, find themselves gradually drawn into a smaller and smaller circle of interests. The large ambitions of doing for others, the high ideals which haunted their boyhood, gradually fade from their thoughts; and in time, they who in privilege, ability, and character had the opportunity of influencing a whole community, it may be of uplifting the political or social life about them, have settled down into a comfortable chair at the club.

The man — and with our increasing leisure class we are multiplying them — who thus lives to himself and a few friends, who spends money and time regardless of the great needs of the community, has not in him the first principle of modern civilization. For that stands upon the basis of the common interest, and the welfare of the whole people. If the privilege of wealth and leisure is abused by those who have them, there will soon be no room in the community for them. For with the rising power of democracy and the increasing realization of the solidarity of the community, public opinion, and then public legislation,

will cut down the possibilities of such a life. The people are willing to see a man who has earned his wealth, or at least one who uses his wealth well, enjoy a fair proportion of it. But it is a question how long they will endure the expensive luxury of those who having wealth waste or spend it on themselves.

While such a life may be more open to censure in a man, may we not also ask whether the life of mere society is any more graceful in a woman? Why should those who have culture, attractiveness, sympathies and social power, be content to limit them to the small circle of one class of society, when they might be vital centres of sympathy in the larger social life, and realize the grateful sense of leading others to better and not more frivolous lives? There is something almost grotesque in the way that capable and in most respects sensible women regret the pressure of society, protest that they wish they were out of it, and insist that such a waste of time and the turning night into day is against all conscience and reason, and then move into the centre of the whirl as unconsciously and naturally as possible.

Of course there is no sharp line between the worldly and the unworldly, the selfish and the unselfish, the good and the bad ; there are virtues and faults in each. Frivolity is not the only sin, nor the worst one by any means. But the first point that I want to make — and I repeat it especially for the young men and women who have their future before them — is that a life devoted to one's own pleasure, to the round of social life, winter and summer, is out of harmony with the trend of modern civilization. It is narrowing, weakening, and unworthy of men and women of a privileged class whose large opportunity is to give something of the abundance of their life to others, to the welfare of the larger society, the whole community.

Let us, however, leave the negative aspect of the case. I want to tell you of the privilege of helpfulness and the glory of leadership by service.

Wherever there has been nobility of character, there has been the glad acknowledgment that with privilege came duty and opportunity. The ancient nobility, so far as it was really noble, recog-

nized their duty to the serfs, their servants and soldiers; and between the baron and his people was the bond of mutual service. The chivalrous officer has always gloried in leading to danger. The true scholar has put his learning at the service of the world. Surely, in this country, where formal rank is unrecognized, those who are splendid in wealth, rich in culture, and noble in character, have a magnificent opportunity. I know that we are told that the common people are unappreciative of fineness of culture and beauty of character; that influence goes to those who bid for it, and that small men hold the offices and the power. Even if this were so, as it certainly is not, still *noblesse oblige*. Culture and character do not look to or care for immediate results.

But beyond the sense of duty comes the ambition to be a full man. "Unto the perfect man" must be the goal of every one who claims manly qualities. The trouble with most of our lives is that they lack proportion: one is simply a money-maker, another a pleasure-seeker, and another, despising money and pleasure, devotes himself to a life of

self-sacrifice. Whereas, while each man must have his individual characteristics, each must also be broad and large and fully developed enough to have many interests and to hold them in proper perspective. In this was the charm of Sir Philip Sidney — not that he was braver than others, or a better courtier or a purer poet than others ; but that he had all the qualities which go to make up the man, in such true proportion. He was, as one biographer calls him, "the essence of congruity."

Now I care not how cultured, refined, brave, or honest a man may be, if he have not a sympathetic outlook upon the less fortunate and the great numbers of the community who have not had his privileges; if he have none of the spirit of real sacrifice, of helpfulness, then he lacks one of the loveliest and richest traits of true manhood. It is this that helps him to be master of himself as well as of others. The sense that some one needs him and looks to him for help, appeals to his self-respect, his strength of purpose, his patience, and his moral courage.

Thus by uplifting others he himself is

uplifted in character; by serving others he becomes master of himself.

The attractive feature of wealth and position to the modern man is the sense of power that they give — a power to command and to mould the lives of others. But, my friends, such a satisfaction bears no comparison with the gratification which comes from the knowledge that one life has been helped by you, and that that life is within your power, not to enslave, but to redeem. This is the reward which comes to all helpers of men in greater or less degree, — to the doctor, the teacher, the charity-worker. This is the glory of the ministry. As I see young men pleased with their success in law and business, as they have a right to be, I cannot but compare that pleasure with the deep gratification of the minister, who, working in humble homes, finds that by his devotion lives and hearts are bound to him by the deepest gratitude. While his friends are wondering why he went into that dull calling, he is wondering why hundreds of men who are passing their lives adding figures, trying cases, or sitting in the club are willing to forego the grati-

fication of that most interesting calling which deepens with every year of life.

I cannot but think that the heart of Jesus must have bounded with intense joy at the gratitude of one poor life which owed all to Him. There must have swept over Him that sweet sense of spiritual power. That life was His to command. He would use His power to redeem that life, to bring it to its best self and to God.

XIII

A KEY-NOTE OF COLLEGE LIFE[1]

"AND the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." [2]

The command is crisp and clear. Its note is, it seems to me, in harmony with the spirit and purpose of this our first service in the college chapel at the opening of the college year.

Our meeting here, with its service and addresses, is not for the discussion of some doctrine, or some particular phase of Christian thought and work, but in this crisis of collegiate and individual life to look each other in the face, to gather confidence in the recognition of fellow-workers, and in the realization of a common Father and Master. Thus, those who are taking up

[1] Appleton Chapel, Harvard University, September 28, 1890.

[2] Exodus xiv. 15.

the second, third, or fourth year of the work that they laid down in June may gather fresh confidence and enthusiasm; and those who have entered these doors for the first time may realize that the same God and the same faith are here that are found in their homes, and that in this new phase of life larger inspirations may come to meet the greater risks and the nobler duties.

The thought of every student to-night is forward, and the point that I want to emphasize is that it is only in a positive movement forward that safety, truth, life, and character exist.

Let me first say that the value of the future is to be measured by a realization of the value of the present.

One or two generations ago the stress of Christian preaching was laid upon the future life, its heavenly promises and its dreadful condemnations. This life was one of mere probation for the next. And thus the present existence with its duties and its heavenly satisfactions was sometimes robbed of its importance and reality. To-day the stress of the living preacher is laid upon the eternal *now:*

"He that believeth *hath* everlasting life." Here and now are Heaven and Hell, blessedness and condemnation, reward and punishment.

There is, I think, something of our old way of looking at life in the manner in which school and college days are often treated. They are emphasized as terms of preparation and probation for mature manhood. The schoolboy is thus tempted to belittle his opportunities, in expectation of the larger ones in college life, and the young man in college does not take the risks and sins and chances at their full value, in the impression that the real ones will come in later years. The true perspective of life is warped. Of course the truth of probation and preparation have their importance, but the work of the present is to emphasize the worth of the present.

Whatever value your studies here have in the preparation for your profession or future work, the real and deeper motive is the higher one; the seeking of truth for the truth's sake; the development in character for character's sake; the growth in culture and manhood, because cultivated manhood is the richest gift

that college or man can give to humanity.

Life is not measured by the number of years; the fullest life is not always that which is old and gray-headed. Life is measured by its reality while life is. The middle-aged man in looking at his present risks and opportunities in business or society finds them no more real than those of his college days, although college was said to have been a time of preparation for the real duties of life. No, my friends, the realities of life are here. Temptation is seldom keener than in college days. Opportunities are seldom, perhaps never larger. Here character has its real tests, and true life its highest satisfaction.

There may be, there are artificial standards in different social groups. So there are outside the college gates; but there is, I believe, no standard in mature age so even and sure as the respect which comes to one in college who, with all modesty, is true to his convictions and faithful to his opportunities.

With this year, ay, with this very week, come the crises and the tests of life. And my first word is, meet them

with all the courage and earnestness with which you would meet the real crises of middle life; for these are the real crises. The college is beyond all other places the valley of decision. And the movement upward or downward begins early. Behold, "now" is literally the day of each college man's salvation.

The key-note of our text is "forward;" and the test of the true life is in its advancement.

The question that first rises for answer is, in what does advancement consist?

Some of you, in separating from your old schoolmates who are to enter business directly, may have had a pang of regret lest they get ahead faster. Four years will find them experienced in business methods, and far in advance of the young graduate in the art of making money and the school of the market. To many people in this country a college education is synonymous with four years wasted in studies that do not profit, and in gaining knowledge that has no market value.

Of course, if success in the market is

the test of advancement, then college life may be a failure in giving the forward movement. But if life has other riches and rewards, then it may be that some of them are gained here.

The noblest march which humanity is making to-day is the quest of the truth. Truth may be found in the activities of professional and business life; she is found there. But in this place the whole motive and purpose of life is in the search for truth. The challenging cry in the life of the student is the echo of the Lord's word, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." And as they move, they have the realization that the noblest men of the past are with them. In the touch of student with student, in the sympathetic talk and thought, the movement gains in strength. As the young man takes one of the narrowest lines of study, and devotes himself to that, but never allows himself to be enslaved by it; as he studies that in relation to the larger fields of science and the eternal laws of nature; as he recognizes in his microscopic interest the unity of God's universe and the true relations of man, his

life is broadened while his mind is deepened, and he is the larger man for his specialist's work.

As the student talks with fellow-student of the ideals of life, of the hopes and possibilities; as each cheers the other on in the effort after nobler thought and action, the movement is steadily forward. Character is ennobled, truth is gained, and the nation is being enriched, not with opened mines of silver, but with a finer manhood and with higher ideals of life.

I want to suggest, this evening, two phases of progress which have their special place in this chapel.

First, I wish to speak of the movement towards a deeper and more vital faith.

There is a popular impression that college life is necessarily dangerous to a man's faith. Many are the parents who have sent their sons to this place and to other colleges this month, with the heavy load of dread lest their boys return with an education gained and a faith lost. If it is true that with the increase of culture must come the decrease of faith,

then surely culture has a terrible indictment to answer to.

We have no such impression. That the faith often does decline in college is true; that young men of prayer and religious life go forth, prayerless and irreligious, cannot be gainsaid; but that these have any necessary connection with college life and thought, it seems hardly worth while to deny.

College has, of course, all the danger that intensity of interest brings in any phase of life; as with the business man or lawyer, the keen interests in the present activities deaden the senses to their higher and spiritual meaning. The student who comes here full of simple piety soon finds that the unaccustomed pressure of the intellectual duties and recreations, of the athletic and social activities, is felt in every hour of the day. The habits of family life are broken up; the conventionalities of the home, the moments of prayer, the worship on Sunday, are pressed into. Something has to give way in order to make room for the new interests, and the young man awakens some day to find that his religious habits have gone, and that his faith is fast dis-

appearing. Or the case may be worse than this. The temptations of college life sweep in on the untried character. In some young men the first experience in liberty leads to license. The desire to be popular weakens the moral fibre. High principles give way to foolish actions. These undermine the character and destroy the ideals of life. The semblance of religion may be kept up for awhile; but the man is too honest not to see the hypocrisy in that, and too logical not to feel the inconsistency of his present life and a real faith; so that faith has to go. And in later years the fashionable cynic who was a religious boy calls religion a fraud, and college life a dangerous experience for any man.

In all the talk of the decline of faith, I believe that a large part is due not to serious and deliberate questionings, not to high intellectual doubts, but to these very commonplace causes, the gradual loss of religious habits, and a careless or immoral life. Let each doubter question himself in these, before he rises to more ambitious grounds. Let these be corrected, before he hopes to clear the

horizon of his doubts by intellectual discussions.

But the point that I want to press is that the college life should give, and often does give, the noblest results in the advance of personal faith and religious life.

There is no doubt that in the intellectual activities and discoveries the beliefs and opinions of boyhood have to readjust themselves. Who can think of a living faith when such readjustment is avoided? No doubt hard questions and serious ones have to be met; in this is one sign of a true movement. In the husbandry of a vital faith, the branches and trunk may perhaps have to be cut, and the life may seem to be taken out of the very roots; but with the heart humble, the life pure, and the mind open, the vital element is sure to show itself, and out of the ruin will grow up a more beautiful, strong, and living faith.

Few men pass through college in these days without some such experience. The danger is not in the meeting, but in the trying to escape the questions, and to brace up the old scaffolding of faith with makeshifts instead of boldly testing the

reality or existence of the faith behind the scaffolding.

Here, then, is the great opportunity for renewing and vitalizing the religious life and the personal faith, but the look must be forward.

With the development of intellectual life, with the changed emphasis of various truths, with the new revelations in letters, philosophy, and life, come larger suggestions of the relation of Christ's religion to all these. The personal religious faith, which has kept us pure and strong in boyhood, now opens up into new and wider vistas. Some of the ideas and opinions which we have identified with the faith gradually separate themselves as the shell parts from the bursting acorn: but the living element of trust in God, confidence in Him who is the Truth and the Life, gathers to itself more and more of the interests of life. Now, as we think the matter out, there are not two worlds, — the world of culture and the world of religion, — but they are bound together in the same universe, in the same life. God is more than the Heavenly Father of childhood; He is also the maker and

giver of all good things, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. Christ is more than the Saviour who died that souls might be saved: He is the great elder brother, the type of perfect humanity; He is the centre about whom all elements of truth, all discoveries and revelations cluster.

From the day that the first student entered this college, two hundred and fifty years ago, think of the movements in the theories of philosophy and science and of the revolutions in theology. Men's hearts have failed them for fear lest the faith were vanishing with each generation. But, amidst it all, how the person of Christ has risen to greater and greater dignity, until now He stands as the centre of all true religion.

This, then, is the sheet anchor of your faith. In all the discussions and questions and denials, keep close in sympathy with the essence of Christ's character; learn of Him, study Him, set your standards by Him, live in Him; and you may be sure that, whatever your opinions or your theories, you will hold the vital element of the faith which you brought from your home.

Religion is not here on sufferance, merely to be held on to until the stress of college thought and life is past. This chapel has no apologies for standing open in the centre of intellectual activities every morning of the term. The chapel claims that the truth she represents is the centre and the vital force of the best life of the college. From her and from the faith for which she stands radiate the light and the life which give the glory and the inspiration to all the truth and the manhood that dwells under the shadow of the university. On the truth as interpreted by Christ and the Church, the college was founded. On that same truth and in that same faith do she and her students now live.

From this we are led to the other thought of the positive, I may almost say the aggressive, action which belongs to the student of the university.

Where in the world would you look for hope, and inspiration, and enthusiasm, unless it be among a thousand young men with life before them, and truth and experience still their earnest

quest? And where, I may ask, have we a better right than here to expect heroic action, the scorn of meanness, and the highest ambitions? The overshadowing influence of a university is oppressive to some persons; they feel that its influence and the associations within its gates are all-powerful. "What effect do you think the college will have on my son?" is the question of the anxious father. "What effect is your son going to have upon the college?" is the response of the wiser teacher.

For where man touches man so closely, where public opinion is so sensitive, where four years make a generation and eight years make an ancient tradition, where the spirit is democratic and character tells for what it is, there are untold possibilities for influence in the college life. Few men will ever have such opportunity for good or evil as in these four years. College history is full of the instances of what one or a group of strong, manly, and religious young men have done in creating and reforming public opinion, in elevating the standards of life, in upholding purity, honor, and truth.

The college waits for no leader; she needs none. She looks to each man to do his own earnest, enthusiastic part. She has thrown heavy responsibilities upon the students. Even the vitality and the earnestness of the religious life depend not upon the college organization, but upon the whole body of scholars and teachers. If each of us puts forth the best that is in him, and faithfully and earnestly does his part in the religious and moral, as well as the intellectual and athletic life of the university, who knows what four years or one year may bring forth?

We who live perpetually within the touch of this university are often in danger of overlooking the ennobling influences about us. The routine and the daily duties push before us the details, the discouragements, and the smaller satisfactions of the work. And so we lose the true perspective, and forget the nobler phases, the historic aspect, and the cloud of witnesses around and behind us.

It was only two or three weeks ago that a master of one of the great schools

of England stood in yonder Hall and said, with mingled admiration and regret, that neither Oxford nor Cambridge had anything to compare with the idea of that memorial for inspiration, self-sacrifice, and patriotism. And now that a Soldiers' Field is added to the Memorial Hall, and that saintly scholars and holy ministers and chivalrous youths look down upon us, who could ask for a nobler company and a higher inspiration?

Oh, then, as we take up the year in the name of Christ and his saints, let us be of good courage, full of faith, ready to act in His service. Let each man's heart speak to himself and to others of the higher life: "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward."

XIV

A SERVANT OF HIS OWN GENERATION [1]

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers." [2]

Such was the summary of David's life work. It was an obituary modest, true, and noble. St. Paul spoke the words. He was giving to the people of Antioch a sketch of Israel's history. As he mentioned the name of the great King David, he might naturally have broken forth in high eulogy; he might have pointed out his courage, statesmanship, and faith; he might have shown how David's life had influenced the generations after him.

But Paul, holding his eloquence within the closest bounds, summed up the life in the simple but great panegyric: "David, after he had served his own genera-

[1] Baccalaureate Sermon, Appleton Chapel, Harvard University, Cambridge, June 17, 1894.

[2] Acts xiii. 36.

tion by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers."

Taking David as he was, with his greatness and his weaknesses, and his generation as it was, with its social and national conditions, the greatest word that could be said of him was that he filled his place and did his duty in his own day; he served his own generation.

The thoughts, the ideals, and the dreads of the people to-day are largely in the future. "What are we coming to?" we hear on every hand. "What mean this warfare of classes, with its violence and bloodshed, this increase of socialism, this decay of honor in politics, this rising idea of the solidarity of humanity, this revolution of religious thought? Great changes are in store for the next century, great movements for the better and for the worse."

And so, dwelling on these thoughts, we somehow take it for granted that we are approaching the brink of great revolutions in social, political, and religious life. The forward look moves our interest and sympathies.

Now, while this may all be true, and

while in its proportion the forward look has its place, the thought that I want to emphasize, my friends, is that we are now living in the present, and that our duty is in the present conditions; that he serves the future best who best serves the present.

I have no new thoughts to give you to-day. I do not believe that you care for them now. What you want is a simple, straightforward statement of a few of the duties of an educated young man in these times, so that you may think over them and act upon them.

These I wish to suggest in the three phases of social, political, and religious life.

First, in the social life.

In our discussions as to the present and future social conditions, two points are usually emphasized: one, which I have already suggested, that changes are coming. The times seem out of joint; social injustice is said to exist; but where to put the blame, or make the cure, is not so easy to state. The other point emphasized is that men are needed who will throw themselves into the work of

studying and changing these social conditions; men who will devote themselves to the uplifting of humanity, experts in charities and model tenements, philanthropists who will give time, money, and life for the poor.

This is all well and noble. Not a word that I may say, will, I trust, weaken an ambition to ennoble the social conditions of the future, or will check a man from devoting his life to charities.

And yet these do not strike me as the first or most immediate calls to the men of the present. For what do we find as the conditions of to-day? This is, for instance, an era of commerce and business; farming, manufacturing, and trading employ the lives of the mass of men, who are called by God and by the conditions of the times to put their lives into these duties. This is an age which has been forced to recognize the limitations of man's power in what are called the laws of nature, of competition, and of demand and supply.

Looked at from one point of view, it sometimes seems as if, under these laws and the great movements of famines and harvests, men were helpless. On

the other hand, this is an age which has called forth and discovered the power of man over nature. Through the ambition, the dauntless courage and the dominant will of man, the world's surface has been changed, and nature has yielded her hoarded riches. Behind the laws of nature and competition, then, we have the spirit of man, who can transform the conditions, guide the powers, and turn what might be scourges into blessings.

The point, then, that I am after is that the great majority of you and of all young men have got to take up life in its present conditions. You have got to choose your calling, be a doctor, or a lawyer, or a broker, or a manufacturer, earn your living, and take your humble part in the great social organism. The great work in life will be, not first to change the conditions of society, but taking the conditions as they are, to broaden and ennoble the life within them. What I urge, then, is a larger conception of your business, a broader view of your profession.

Perhaps I can put it best in this way.

There is, you know, the popular distinction between business and charity.

A man may be in a position wherein, by perfectly legitimate and business-like methods, he may impoverish his neighbor; that is business: and then he may sit down and sign a large check by which he may relieve that neighbor from utter want; that is charity. Or a doctor may treat a patient and get the largest fee possible; that is business: and then he may give his services to some poor patient; that is charity. Now, while there is an element of truth in these distinctions, I claim that you cannot slice up a man in that way, and ticket his different acts with the labels of business and charity. He is a man; and the spirit with which he conducts business or charity infuses all his acts. A hard, narrow, business man may give his checks to the poor every day, and yet be lacking in the deeper elements of a charitable spirit; and a doctor may be firm in his charges to the poor, and yet in the depth of his sympathy, the devotion of his best skill upon all classes, be full of the spirit of charity.

Within a week a man has refused to gain thousands of dollars in increased rent by letting a fraction of his building

for a bar-room. It was not business, and it was not charity; but it was a high conception of what he owed to his own self-respect and to the community. As one of the trust lawyers of Boston, who was also one of the ornaments of a governing Board of this University, put it some years ago: "No gentleman rents his buildings for a saloon."

The intricacy of social and business life is such that it is very difficult to place responsibility. Some of you may, in a few years, be directors of a mill or of a mine. As directors, you must conduct the business on business principles; buy labor in the cheapest market and make profits for your stockholders of whom you are one. Meanwhile, through these very business methods, the working people are being ground to poverty. The community where they live is ridden with rum and low political and social life. It is not the business of the directors and stockholders to keep those people clean and pure; it is not business to build hospitals or provide them with decent tenements. And yet, as the profits come in part from the labor of that community, as there is at least a slight

connection of employer and employed, it is the duty of some one, — and who more than the directors and stockholders, not as such, but as men? — to take their part in the social uplifting. Do not understand me that the work of business and social uplift can be divided among the mills and corporations and mines. I have no such dream as that. But what I do plead for is that you, as business men, manufacturers, miners, and stockholders, will infuse into your business more of the spirit of humanity, of high honor which is more than honesty, and of mutual forbearance and helpfulness which is more than what is called charity. It is well to remember that to a self-respecting workingman there is nothing more irritating than that he should have favors on the ground of charity; and also to remember that that same man expects and demands justice, and while democracy reigns he is going to have it.

It is one of the great dangers of life that duty usually calls us to see only one or a few phases of life; so that the capitalist sees his own interest and the laborer his. It is natural and it is dangerous. A wider vision, a larger sympathy, a

nobler conception of his calling, are the privileges of a man of liberal education. So that in the service of his generation he gives to his calling, be it medicine, law, business, or what you will, a larger meaning, a broader usefulness and a greater power.

I turn now to the duty of the educated man in the political life; or, I should rather say, his duty as a patriot.

You have had, during these four years, a nobler object-lesson than is given to any other university. To pass through Memorial Hall day after day, to read the names upon the tablets, to look upon the portraits of the heroes, is a perpetual call to patriotism. You have missed the inspiration which came to us thirty years ago in the drum-beat, the sound of war, the crippled soldiers upon the streets, the frequent cheer, the suspense as the news of battle was passed from mouth to mouth, the sorrow, the soldiers' funerals, the welcome home, the victories. The blood moves quicker now as one recalls the news of Gettysburg, Antietam, Mobile, and Richmond. The Harvard Memorial Biographies, containing the

lives of those whose names are on yonder tablets, always stand on the shelf at my right hand, next to my Bible, that in any hour of discouragement I may dip into them and catch some of their noble spirit.

Pardon the personal word; but I want to make you realize how Harvard has shed her blood for the country.

"They served their own generation by the will of God, and fell on sleep and were laid unto their fathers." And now for ourselves, and this generation, what are the calls to service?

I might tell you that the educated and privileged man is needed in the political life. I might urge you to the study of political movements and action in them. I might press you to drop your chosen profession or business and devote yourself to the lifting of the political life from the slough in which it is floundering to-day — and I would do well. But, as I suggested before, my thought to-day is not for the specialists and the devotees, but with the great body of men who are going to earn their living and do their duty in the various callings of life. What duties have they as

patriots? What can they do for their country?

In the first place, they are a part of the great body of the people who create the public sentiment, who develop the politicians, and who support the leaders. Therefore the first and supreme duty is that a man have a noble and high conception of what a nation is, and what his country should be. We have reached a time in the Christian era when we are outgrowing the savage idea that the truest patriot is he who fights longest, oftenest, and latest for his country, be she right or wrong. Humanity is larger than the nation, and though self-protection and even increase of national power may be right, yet the nations are the servants of humanity, and their great work is the development of a humanity that is just, true, and merciful.

The true conception of the nation is not that of physical force, armies or wealth, but that of a great people bound together by the strongest ties of justice, truth, and mercy, and pledged to act with high honor toward other nations. A nation, therefore, owes it to itself to be just and true to the weakest people in

the world, even though it be at the cost of pride and self-restraint. For injustice will react upon the character of the people and demoralize the nation itself.

Your first duty, then, is to see, as far as in you lies, that no love of conquest, no pride in a great navy, no jingoism, no desire to act the bully, leads this nation to be unjust, untrue, and unmerciful. National righteousness first, the country afterwards.

Again, the foundation of our democracy is trust in man, mutual confidence that men will be true to their trust. On this rests the sacredness of the ballot. If the people once really lose confidence in their fellow-men, — that the voter may be bought, that the alderman may be bought, that the senator may be bought, — then will come the time and opportunity for Cæsarism and for government by force.

Occasionally we are startled by rumors of corruption in high places, — by strong evidence, too, — and then we blame the leaders and the politicians. I call you back to the thought that the people make the leaders. When, then, any such flagrant breach of trust is known,

first look to yourself and to the body of the people. May it not be that the public evil is only a symptom of a popular sin — ay, of your own attitude?

The director of a corporation, who is pressing some interest through the legislature, and who turns his back and shuts his eyes while some one else carries it through for him (though he suspects or he well knows, by doubtful methods or by bribery), is the embodiment of the worst spirit in our national life. The citizens who by evil compromise or influence push their own private interests through our legislatures in spite of the public good represent the same spirit. Our complicated forms of business make it difficult to place responsibility. One wicked partner can handle the doubtful work. Therefore upon the shareholders — in other words, upon the great body of citizens — rests the responsibility that, so far from conniving at doubtful methods or being indifferent to them, they shall be aggressive in their endeavors and demands that everything touching public life shall be above the suspicion of fraud or bribery.

The men of one section may be try-

ing to get something for nothing by paying their debts in silver. The men of another section may have been getting something for nothing by speculating in Western lands, railroads, and mines, and by controlling the legislatures. That they have lost as well as gained does not touch the ethics of the question. The weak spot has been in the selfishness with which self-interest and sectional interest are pushed regardless of the rights of the whole people.

The life of a private citizen as well as that of a public man is a trust. It is due to the community as well as to himself that in his personal relations, his business, his expenditures and his luxuries, the citizen does not offend the conscience of the people, nor rudely disturb the conventionalities of society, but rather, if he be a man of education, that he sustain by his own example the conscience of the people, making them sensitive to every suspicion of dishonesty, and leading them to self-restraint, simplicity, and nobility of life.

I now come to the suggestion of a few of the duties of the educated young

man in the religious life of this generation.

One condition stands out clear in the fundamental principles of our nation, — the freedom of the state from the church, religious liberty. And the first duty of every citizen is to withstand every suggestion and every act of legislation which looks towards the patronage of any form of religion by the state.

Religious liberty means for the people responsibility. Looking to the state for no aid nor recognition, the members of the church must look to themselves if they are to sustain and upbuild the religious character of the people. We have, my friends, in this university and in New England a noble religious inheritance. In the stock and character of the people is stored a rich capital of spiritual experience inherited from our fathers.

Three simple points I want to make.

In the first place: without the sympathy of men of education, without the sweet reasonableness, the breadth of vision, the patient love of truth, and the deep-seated enthusiasm which go with culture, the religion of the people

will become emotional, vulgar, and narrow.

On the other hand, without the simple faith, the earnestness, the hope and the devotion which go with the religion of the common people, culture will lose its virility, become over-ripe, cynical, and nerveless. Therefore the man of the truest culture will be the man of the deepest religious sympathies. Instead of cutting down his faith to its barest elements and studying how little he believes, he will count faith a noble thing and see how much he can believe. He will look at religion not as a series of statements, a list of dogmas, or a bunch of emotions, but as communion with the great Spirit who embodies all truth, justice, and love; every good and every perfect gift from science, from culture, from history, and from experience is from Him. Thus will go hand in hand the development of character, of culture, and of faith.

In the next place: I warn you against the stolid commercial spirit which is liable to come with middle age. Youth is saved by its ideals.

Twenty years hence, some of your

ideals will have been lost, some of your hopes broken, and your interests bound up in making a living, carrying on your business, and satisfying your clients. Then the changes of the market, the newspaper seven days in the week, the interest in politics, and the small talk of the day, may gradually enwrap you, and you may become one of those stolid, uninteresting, commercial machines that we meet in the offices and clubs. I trust not. To escape this, the great truths which are bound up in religion must be your companions. The romance which even in these commercial days goes with the life of God's saints must move you. The self-sacrifice, the sweet charity, and the great hopes that still fill the lives of Christ's children must touch and inspire you. No man or community can live on the spiritual inheritance of the past without becoming spiritually bankrupt. The hope of the present cannot be in the religion of the past, but in the faith and in the life of the present.

In the third place (and I speak very practically): if you think thus, if you believe that faith and Christ have their place in the present, you have an imme-

diate and a life-long duty, — that of expressing the faith in your words and character, that of giving to the world in your life the truth, the purity, the public spirit, and the self-sacrifice of Christ Himself.

You may have felt, my friends, that this sermon is hardly up to the dignity of a Baccalaureate; it has not treated of great thoughts in a great way as becomes the close of a university career. Certainly I have felt it. And yet, even if I could have spoken with the conventional dignity of such occasions, I would not.

No son of Harvard who comes here to speak to you from the problems, the sins, the needs, the heroisms, and the hopes of the great body of the people can say other than the simple, earnest word that moves him.

Men of the class of '94, the country needs men — pure, true, strong, and faithful. God help you to be such. You have a few years in which to labor, fight, and conquer here; and then, when life is over, may your Alma Mater be able to bear witness, "He served his own generation by the will of God."

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